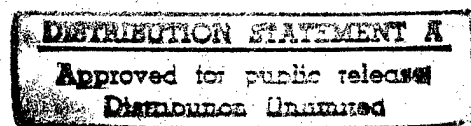


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Near East/South Asia Report



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21 February 1986

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REGIONAL AFFAIRS

ARAB LEAGUE'S KLIBI WARNS U.S. ON 'INVENTED' LIBYAN CRISIS

LD302017 Kuwait KUNA in English 1805 GMT 30 Jan 86

[Text] Tunis, 30 Jan (KUNA) -- Arab League Secretary General Chadli Klibi Thursday warned the U.S. administration against carrying too far its invented crisis with Libya, lest, he said, this would adversely affect overall Arab-U.S. relations.

In an inaugural address this evening before an Arab league council extraordinary session, called to deal specifically with U.S. military threats and economic sanctions against Libya, Klibi stated that the real motive behind this U.S. invented campaign, instigated by Zionist circles, is to distract world public opinion from the Middle East crisis and the Palestinian cause in particular, he charged.

"By preoccupying every state capable of defending international legitimacy," the Arab league chief explained, "the U.S. wants to fight against terrorism to supercede all other activities and thus championing of the Palestinian cause would turn into a form of defending terrorism."

Lashing out at the U.S. unilateral imposition of economic sanctions against Libya and military threats against the Arab country, Klibi said that such a serious behavior by this superpower "to exercise, all will and outside the international legitimacy, represented by the U.N., military threats and punitive measures against another state is undoubtedly a grave conduct in international relations."

He questioned the type of political system the world will have if every state took the liberty to become the authority in passing judgements and the tool to deliver punishment, without knowledge or approval of the U.N.

Head of the 22-member league noted that on repeated occasions, last of which was the extraordinary Arab summit in Casablanca, the Arab states had denounced acts of terrorism against civilians not involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

However, he emphasized that a clear distinction should be made between such terrorism and the legitimate struggle being waged inside the occupied Arab lands to regain the inalienable Palestinian national rights, recognized by the U.N. under a host of adopted resolutions.

In addition, Klibi noted, the Arab states, acting from a deep interest in maintaining world peace and security against individual and [words indistinct], had repeatedly called for elimination of real causes of tension, brought by frustration "from the world community's failure to stop acts of repression against the Palestinians practiced by the Zionist occupiers," he stressed.

The extraordinary league session, which opened this evening, was chaired by Bahrain's chief delegate, head of the Foreign Ministry's Political Administration Ali Ibrahim al-Mahrus who also denounced the U.S. threats and measures against the Libyan people.

The senior Bahraini delegate joined Klibi's call for "a cautious and determined Arab collective action" against the U.S. hostile stance which can protect Libya and safeguard the Arabs' national security.

A Libyan working paper, presented to the extraordinary session, demanding an Arab trade and economic boycott of the U.S. and countries sympathizing with it was withdrawn by Tripoli.

In a short speech, Libya's Foreign Minister Dr 'Ali 'Abd al-Salam al-Turayki told the delegates it was up to the Arab countries to decide what they deem necessary to confront the U.S. threats and measures.

However, the Libyan official urged a "determined and collective Arab stance against enemies of the Arab nation that would assert the dignity of this nation."

The Libyan paper also sought application of a joint Arab defense pact in case of an armed attack against the Jamahiriyah and Arab financial support to the Tripoli Government to help it overcome the present difficulties brought by [words indistinct] economic sanctions.

The note further demanded implementation of oil contracts by Arab oil-exporting countries with the U.S. in a manner protecting against any negative impact on Libyan oil revenues and adoption of a unified Arab stance from the U.S. and its supporters.

/12929

CSO: 4500/76

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

SOVIETS SEEK ARMS MARKETS IN PERSIAN GULF

GF121511 London KEYHAN in Persian 2 Jan 86 p 4

[Text] Kuwait--A high-ranking Soviet diplomat arrived in Kuwait on Saturday, 21 December for a 4-day visit. Diplomats residing in Beirut state that the Soviet delegation was visiting Kuwait to find fresh markets in other parts of the Persian Gulf to sell arms made in the Soviet Union. These high-paying markets had so far been closed to Moscow. A Western diplomat said: This visit is possibly to search for arms markets in areas farther down the Persian Gulf.

General Vladimir Govorov, Soviet deputy defense minister, is visiting Kuwait as the head of a high-ranking delegation consisting of members of the Soviet Ministry of Defense.

Since the Arab-Israel war of 1973, the GCC member countries (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar, and the UAE) have become the biggest arms market in the world. Except for Kuwait, which is a major buyer of Soviet arms, the remaining countries of the GCC have so far been buying arms from Britain, France, and the United States.

The Soviet Union and the UAE announced last month that they would soon exchange ambassadors. Oman had some weeks earlier announced the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.

Pogos Akopov, Soviet ambassador in Kuwait, attended the Bahrain national day reception in Kuwait. Diplomats say that the Arabs establishing diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union is taking place as they are highly angry about the U.S. policy in the Middle East, especially over its continued support for Israel. Nothing has been said about General Govorov's visit to other countries in the Persian Gulf, but one diplomat said: Kuwait has been a springboard for the latest successes of the Soviet diplomats in the Persian Gulf and the Soviet Embassy in Kuwait has prepared sound ground for this.

Saudi Arabia has earmarked more than a third of its 1984-85 budget for defense and is at present beyond the reach of Soviet efforts to sell arms to it. Some time ago the minister of defense of Saudi Arabia announced that Riyadh has no intention of restoring diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.

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CSO: 4640/160

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

GCC AGREEMENT CALLS FOR CUSTOMS INTEGRATION

Doha AL-RAYAH in Arabic 27 Nov 85 p 6

[Text] The unified economic agreement between the Arab Gulf states aims at coordinating efforts for economic cooperation amongst the member countries in various ways and establishing joint self-sufficient economic unity which would work towards the achievement of comprehensive economic development.

The terms of the agreement provide for the promotion of trade between the member countries, the abolishing of customs duties on indigenous products from these countries and the imposition of a unified tariff on all imports. The following is a review of the agreement:

Article 1 of the agreement allows the member countries to trade indigenous agricultural, animal and industrial products as well as natural resources with other member countries. All these products are to be treated as indigenous products. Article 2 provides for the exemption of the product from customs duties.

In any country, determining the identity of products and verifying their origin are important factors when importing or exporting any products. Duties, tax rates, restrictions and applicable administrative and customs facilities are all determined on the basis of the product's identity.

Article 3, therefore, stipulates that industrial products will be regarded as indigenous if they meet the following criteria:

--The value added from production of these products in member countries should not be less than 40 percent of their final value upon the completion of production.

--Ownership by citizens in member countries of industrial facilities which manufacture the products should not be less than 51 percent.

The agreement also stipulates that each exempted commodity must be accompanied by a certificate of origin endorsed by the governmental authority concerned.

The Committee for Financial and Economic Cooperation of the Gulf Cooperation Council, which includes the ministers of Finance and Economy, approved, in its 9th meeting held in Riyadh in May 1985, a unified certificate of origin for the member countries.

The Committee decided, at its 10th meeting, held at the headquarters of the general secretariat in Riyadh in September 1985, to task the Council's general secretariat with studying how GCC members can establish controls in accordance with the provisions of the unified economic agreement.

The achievement of national unity among a group of countries in a specific region is considered an obvious phenomenon in all the economic blocs that have emerged on the international scene. The Zollverein which was set up by the German states in 1834 is the most famous example of customs unions in the 19th century. Under that union all trade barriers between the states were lifted and the union succeeded in bringing about the political unity of Germany.

Article 9 of the European Common Market agreement provides for a customs union encompassing all commodities as the basis for the European Community. It also provides for lifting tariffs and restrictions, which have the same impact on imports and exports in member countries, and imposing a unified tariff on trade among these countries.

Article 4 of the unified economic agreement between the Arab Gulf states calls on members to work toward imposing a minimum unified tariff on the outside world. One of the purposes of such a unified tariff would be the protection of national products from the competition of foreign goods.

The member countries, by joining a customs union, seek to achieve the following results: First, the desired establishment of unified economic self-sufficiency capable of bringing about economic development for the member countries. Second, expansion of the market and the reliance on large projects to reduce the cost of production units. A customs union would alleviate the pressure of the limited local market in each country, especially in small countries with small populations and production capacities, such as the Arab Gulf states. It does not make sense for each of them to have similar and independent industries. It is, therefore, necessary for them to coordinate in the establishment of one joint industry.

Third, increasing investment inside the union in projects based on science and technology. Fourth, enabling the GCC members to negotiate with the rest of the world as a large economic entity with considerable weight in economic transactions instead of negotiating as separate units isolated from one another.

A customs union between a group of countries could raise intricate economic, social and political issues, since it touches on issues related to the sovereignty of member states. The result, however, depends upon the nature of the ties between these countries and the goals they hope to attain through integration.

The GCC members have special relations, common characteristics and similar systems, which help strengthen their economic ties. This will contribute to

overcoming sovereignty-related barriers and restrictions for the purpose of achieving the desired economic cooperation.

The implementation of the customs union must be carried out according to the particular procedures and circumstances in each member country. The effects of each stage should also be taken into consideration to avoid any negative impact that may arise during implementation. The transition to more complex stages of the customs union would thus take place in steady increments.

This approach was taken in the Rome Treaty of the European Common Market. Articles 5 and 7 of the agreement provided for a transitional period of 12 years beginning in January 1958 during which time the Market would be established gradually and in three stages, each lasting 4 years. The transitional period was not allowed to be extended to more than 15 years from the effective date of the treaty.

The unified economic agreement between the Arab Gulf states provides for the gradual application of the unified customs tariff amongst the member countries. Item 3 of Article 4 states the following: "The unified customs tariff shall be applied gradually over a period of 5 years from the effective date of the agreement. Gradual arrangements for implementation shall be agreed to within one year of the effective date."

The Committee for Economic and Financial Cooperation of the GCC decided at its 10th meeting in Riyadh in September 1985 that the member countries will begin applying the coordinated system of the customs tariff in accordance with the provisions of the unified economic agreement effective 1986 January 1. It also tasked the directors of customs to draw up two lists of luxury and non-luxury commodities, and to propose the customs tariffs which they feel must be adopted in member countries.

The joining of the GCC countries in a customs union is an important phase of the economic integration of the member countries. But the emphasis on the principle of free trade between the member countries is not sufficient by itself to bring about the desired economic integration. This principle should be coupled with a comprehensive production plan through which the member countries can form a solid production base and economic self-sufficiency which would enable them to gradually reduce their economic dependence on the developed industrial countries.

The increase in production requires the search for new investment areas for oil surpluses and the establishment of joint projects which would be mutually beneficial for all member countries.

A customs union would be limited to freeing up the movement of commodities inside the member countries by lifting the customs barriers between these states, but it would also encourage the free flow of capital and work inside the union in a manner that would bring about more complete economic cooperations amongst the member countries.

Article 8 of the unified economic agreement between the Arab Gulf states stipulates that the member countries must agree on the implementation regulations that would guarantee the treatment of GCC citizens without

discrimination in any of the member countries so that they would have the right to free movement, work, residency, ownership, the practice of economic activities, and transfer of capital.

Article 9 stipulates that member countries should encourage the private sectors to undertake joint projects which would create common economic interests among citizens in these countries.

The authorities concerned should, therefore, work in accordance with a plan that would secure the transfer of production elements such as capital and labor within the member countries in a manner that would bring about comprehensive economic development which, in turn, would bring prosperity to the member countries.

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CSO: 4404/160

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

FUTURE OF ARAB BANKING IN U.S. SURVEYED

Beirut AL-IQTISAD WA AL-A'MAL in Arabic Oct 85 pp 30-33

[Article by Fajr-al-Din Khalil: "Arab Banking Activity in the United States"]

[Text] Arab interest in the U.S. financial market has been growing constantly and has become both widespread and dynamic, though the entry of Arab banks in the United States is a recent phenomenon.

Ten years ago there was no Arab banking activity in the United States. Today there are more than 20 out of a total of 300 banks operating there.

The growth of Arab banking activity in the United States has come as a result of its development and expansion throughout the world. The logic of establishing Arab banking activity in the United States becomes clear when we look at its growth in the Middle East and the rest of the world. Today we find Arab banks in all the major financial centers of the world.

A review of the various phases of Arab banking activity during the past half-century will give us a clearer picture. Prior to 1950 Arab banking activity was conducted mainly by European banks which opened offices in the Arab world. In the vanguard of those who led the establishment of local, independent Arab banks were the Bank al-Rafidayn in Iraq, the Bank al-'Arabi al-Mahdud in Jordan, Bank Misr, and the Bank al-Ahli al-Tijari.

Then in the 1950's and 1960's, Arab countries began to develop powerful local banks. Some of them were either state-owned, owned by private shareholders, or mixed. In some instances local foreign banks were nationalized or merged with local banks to help the economic development policies of governments. In other cases they retained their independent status. During this phase, in addition to the creation of commercial banks, numerous specialized banks were established to reinvigorate specific sectors of the economy. Basically local Arab banks looked at domestic markets and expanded by creating local branches, with some presence abroad.

Expanded political relations and the sharp increase in oil prices have led to the creation of Arab banking consortiums in Europe. These joint venture between Arab and European banks provided many advantages, including the fact

that they provided an effective presence in the market for each side and knowledge of the other side's market.

The activities of these banking consortiums centered in Europe were strictly international in character. They financed trade between the nations where they were located and Arab nations, the projects undertaken by European entrepreneurs in the Arab world, and the investments of Arab clients in Europe. In the 1970's most Arab banks did not develop any business with companies in the places where they were located in Europe, except for tenders and contract warranties.

Following this, branches were opened directly in Europe at the end of the 1970's. For the most part, Arab banks felt that the volume of trade between a specific European country and their own countries was adequate to support a branch. It was also assumed that the average rate of growth in Arab economies and the steady increase in liquidity at the end of the 1970's would create more business with Europe.

Then the basic need of banks to expand markets made Arab banks turn toward the United States. The liquidity generated by petrodollars in certain Arab banks caused a natural migration to peaceful regions for investment. The United States was not only the main sanctuary for petrodollar deposits and investments, but also the principal trading partner of the Arab world. It emerged as the most secure economic and political growth market. New York replaced London as an international financial market.

An initial trend was clear--small investments in regional American banks by individuals or private groups. These investments were limited, even though the American media tended to exaggerate the matter. One of the first investments was the Commonwealth Bank of Detroit in 1975 and the National Bank of Georgia in 1980.

Another well-known purchase of an existing American bank by Arabs was the purchase of First American shares for \$2 billion. First American headquarters are in Washington, D.C. The distressing process of acquiring ownership of this banking company by a group of Saudis and Kuwaits began in 1979 and was completed in 1982. A fourth example was the purchase of the Great Western Bank and Trust of Phoenix, Arizona, in 1981 by a number of Kuwaiti businessmen. In 1983 a prominent Saudi businessman acquired significant shares in the Marine Bank of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. This is a banking company with capital of \$2.5 billion.

A conspicuous manifestation of this trend has been the delegation of authority to the boards of these banks by their Arab owners, continuation of the American identity of these banks, their focus on the local American market, and their continued achievement of profit and growth for their owners, due to good management and enjoyment of a suitable local market.

Until then, investment in these banks was more a commercial investment than a component of Arab-American banking relations.

The second trend of growing importance was the creation of banks and banking offices by Arab banks themselves. This did not occur in significant numbers until the 1980's.

The first direct Arab presence in this form in America was the banking consortium UBAF (the Arab American Bank) which was founded as an American bank registered in New York with majority control by Arab financial institutions and the participation of four American banks. The next direct entry was through the Arab-African International Bank founded in 1979. Its main headquarters are in Cairo.

Then the Gulf International Bank opened in 1980. It is owned by governments of the Arab Gulf, and its office is in New York. In 1981 we saw the entry into the United States of another large bank owned by several governments represented by the Arab Banking Company (of Bahrain), the Arab International Investment Bank (of Paris), the Saudi-European Bank (of Paris), and the Abu Dhabi International Bank.

In 1982 offices were opened in New York, or banking permits were obtained, by the Arab Bank, Ltd, Dubai Bank, Ltd, and Bank 'Awdah. The main Saudi and Kuwaiti banks followed suit by establishing their direct presence in New York.

There was a significant leap forward in comparison with the European experience. The Arab banking presence expanded through multinational banks, Arab-European banking consortiums, government banks, and private Arab domestic banks.

The legal form chosen by Arab banks includes banks chartered by the states, branches, and representational offices, with their various fields of competence.

Regardless of their legal form, Arab banks face mainly the same markets and challenges. In this context, our interest is focused on the competitive position of Arab banks in the United States.

When examining banking service markets, one must distinguish first of all between wholesale and retail. Personal, or retail banking activity, with the exception of services offered the wealthy, is big in volume and small returns. The direct costs are exorbitant. Consequently, Arab banks cannot achieve a broad presence in this field. Two or three banks offer personal banking services to a select group of wealthy Americans of Arab origin or Middle Eastern customers. Services provided wealthy people can lead to investment banking services. Experience indicates that there is a false assumption that Arab banks have many wealthy clients ready to invest in any deal proposed to them. This assumption could not be farther from the truth. The individual Arab investor is like the Western investor when it comes to judgment and knowledge of complicated operations. Commercial banks, whether American or Arab, are generally not the most active mode of private Arab investment in the United States. In our experience, we have found that wealthy Arab families usually use one of the following three channels: their own offices run by specialists hired in New York and other principal cities, personal collaboration with wealthy American investors, or prominent American investment banks.

It is difficult for Arab banking activity to compete, because of the highly specialized service and the particular secrecy assured by these media.

We can expect Arab banks to focus their efforts on the wholesale market of banking which can be divided into banking activity either with companies or correspondents. With regard to the former, British banks for decades followed their company customers throughout the world. American banks did this also. In the late 1960's and in the 1970's European and Japanese banks followed their company customers to the United States, strengthening their position in this market before the arrival of Arab banks. Consequently these latter had to surmount the difficulty of having an adequate number of Arab countries, in relative terms, in the United States.

Let us proceed to the other aspect of activity--American companies which do business in or with Arab countries. There are numerous important groups, including the principal oil companies operating in the Gulf with their services systems, defense contractors, large construction and engineering firms, manufacturers of heavy equipment, and the giant food exporters. All of these have created a significant flow of goods and services to the Middle East and contributed toward its remarkable growth in recent years. This gives banking activity, and large Arab banks in the United States in particular, the capability of offering local services important to the operations of these companies in the Middle East. However multinational American banks previously served this market, and the least one can say is that they are fierce competition. In addition, this market has begun to shrink, since the infrastructure projects in the Arab Gulf have been completed and spare parts sales have taken the place of capital outlays for equipment.

Financing trade is the main source of commissions for American banks, although we are also witnessing a decline in this market.

Consequently, it seems that the apparent challenge to Arab banks in the American market is to obtain a satisfactory share of the market and profits, not only of American companies connected with the Middle East, but also of American companies which have no such relations, by offering services at a competitive rate. If an Arab bank focused on the 500 or 1,000 companies mentioned in FORTUNE, it would usually find several common features:

1. They have strong, long-established banking relations.
2. Several hundred banks, including numerous foreign banks, propose business with them annually.
3. They depend primarily on promissory notes for long-term financing and commercial notes for most of their short-term financing. They use these more than bank loans.
4. The extent of their loans at banks may decline when there is no need.
5. They may reduce their banking relations while strengthening the function of money management.

One of the results of the saturation of this preferred market was that certain Arab banks turned their attention toward mid-market companies where annual sales varied between \$25 million and \$300 million. Traditionally this market had been a field for American regional banks. The relationship between these banks and their customers differs in important ways from that existing between a financial center bank and a large company. The regional bank endorsed the company in its early days. It is bound by ties and a feeling of belonging to the same group. This creates strong loyalty to the bank. Consequently, Arab banks must operate through regional banks to participate in loans, industrial income securities, and other credit facilities with mid-market companies. This means in turn that a real relationship must be created with regional banks through use of their services which must transcend the customary simple exchange and offer money market facilities.

The other challenge confronting Arab banks in the American company market itself is the variety of services offered by American banks. The direct and subsidiary operations of both the banks of American financial centers and the principal regional banks include money management, commercial credit, acquisitions, lending on the basis of assets, mortgages, and other operations.

Arab banks in the United States must find, and are finding, ways to compete by offering services concentrating on company goals in a competitive manner, even though the competition is broad-based. What are the profit margins which Arab banks can expect from their loans to American companies? As long as American domestic banks retain more than 90 percent of the total assets of American banks, it is useful to draw a comparison between American domestic banks and foreign branches in the United States. In this competitive environment, all banks will charge nearly the same interest on their loans. The net interest margin will depend basically on the cost of interest which is in turn tied to the cost of money sources.

Domestic banks finance an average of 20 percent of their assets from demand deposits and 25 percent from savings accounts. Corresponding figures for the offices of foreign banks are much lower.

Most Arab banks are engaged in wholesale activity. They are required to do this with regard to inter-bank deposits and financing. Consequently, one must compare the means of providing money wholesale at lower cost between American domestic banks and Arab banks. Certificates of deposit (CD's) are one of the most logical sources of finance for American banks. Even though few foreign banks can obtain money from the domestic CD market, the market in such certificates introduced by non-American banks continues to shrink.

The Eurodollar continues to be the main source of deposits of Arab banks. This market, too, is witnessing certain changes. Arab banks are increasingly forced to buy their deposits in Eurodollars from non-Arab sources. Creating international banking facilities in New York saves certain local fees, at least for offshore loans financed in Eurodollars. If American loans are made with the parent company in a representational office abroad, then Eurodollar rates can be competitive. For a certain time these rates have usually been 1.25 percent lower than the U.S. preferred interest rate.

In the absence of local demand or savings accounts, and due to the impossibility of reaching the domestic CD and commercial note markets, Arab banks are forced to depend on the American Federal Reserve for loans inside the United States. The Federal Reserve, like inter-bank deposits, is more costly than the usual internal deposits. There is another challenge with regard to the Federal Reserve. Regional banks enjoy a relatively high degree of liquidity because of their deposit base. Financial center banks are usually at the center of net inflow of Federal Reserve money, whereas regional banks are at the center of net supply of this money. Therefore, since the need of Arab banks for American domestic financing is growing, they are forced to go beyond financial center banks to regional banks for credit terms for federal money.

Because of the problems of American banking activity and Third World debt concerns, several American financial center banks are restricting the credit terms they apply among banks. In confronting this background situation, which includes Middle East problems, Arab banks must employ a long-term plan to develop relations with American regional banks.

Nevertheless, costs associated with the commitments to which Arab banks are subject remain higher than comparable costs borne by American banks. In conclusion, let us return to the brighter aspect of opportunities for Arab banking activity in the United States. In the first instance, making loans to purchasers in the domain of export financing appears to be a growing trend for Arab nations. At a time when Arab economies are maturing and experiencing reasonable growth rates, more importers will demand facilities to pay for their purchases.

It is most likely that Arab banks will assume more credit risks in their mother countries than American banks. These services can counterbalance the previously-mentioned disadvantages when trying to build banking relations with American exporters. Branches and agents of Arab banks in the United States can benefit from American import and export programs.

Arab banks, which are directly applying these programs, such as the commercial guaranty note, for instance, can face the support of American export facilities more efficiently for the benefit of their countries, and they can also share in the facilities of guaranteed American agricultural export to certain countries of the Middle East. With their impact, Arab banks will improve the quality of the portfolio of their loans to finance exports.

Second, American suppliers and contractors, through their direct use of Arab banks instead of American correspondents, can lower the cost of business in such regions through the issue of guarantees to participate in bidding and guarantees for the proper execution of contracts.

Third, American contractors working in Arab countries can discuss the foreign contractual arrangements meeting their requirements, with greater flexibility and cost effectiveness, if they work with the American offices of Arab banks, instead of relying on an American middleman.

There is another positive domain of banking activity with correspondents for Arab and other foreign banks. The greatest immediate potential to make a profit in the United States may be in the domain of funds of clearing

accounts, commissions for acquisitions, commissions for notifications of loans and for backing them, and revenue from other services which can be reacquired from the American correspondents of the offices of private banks in the United States.

An analysis of the challenges facing the entry of any group of banks into the most competitive market in the world must not make light of the importance of the meaningful Arab banking presence in the United States. One cannot assume that growth and reasonable profits cannot be made. The size of Arab banks which are growing and their presence in the world market are tied to the economic role which this country plays in international banking activity. The Arab presence is required. With the passage of time, Arab banks here can find their appropriate place in the flow of international commerce and in the markets of banking activity of correspondents at the same time.

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EGYPT

JOURNALIST REFLECTS ON AL-SADAT, MUBARAK ERAS

Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic 23, 30 Nov, 7 Dec 85

[Commentary by Ibrahim Salamah in "From Week to Week" Column: "Egypt is Searching for an Identity"]

[23 Nov 85 pp 28-30]

[Text] I found it profoundly difficult to write about Egypt. I recognize that what happened to me was an acute mixture of clashes between time, vision, and geography.

It is true that I am familiar with Egypt. I lived there until the end of the autumn of 1967. But Egypt has changed a great deal. And I have as well. My current situation is like that of an employee of the United Nations who has been assigned to travel to the Sudan or Yemen to prepare a research study to which the organization will refer in deciding whether it will have a presence there or not.

It became clear to me that the three clashes--time, vision, and geography--were difficult and not easy to explain or describe. Ten years are not insignificant in the life of a nation, particularly when the nation has passed through three trials and afflictions. The first was the War of the Crossing [the 1973 war] against Israel; the second was peace with Israel through al-Sadat's "motion-picture" visit to occupied Jerusalem; the third was the situation of the economic open door and the negative impact it has had on Egyptian society, particularly the big cities (Cairo, Alexandria, Port Sa'id, and Isma'iliya). Within days--we can not even say within weeks--white became red and yellow became blue, such that it led to a situation of economic and social "Indianization." A prominent journalist described it this way: "Egypt has not, since al-Sadat, returned to the Egypt of old, nor has it become the modern Egypt of which we have dreamed for such a long time. It has been left as a nation without a political, economic, or intellectual identity. It is as if a brief, untamable whirlwind passed over this nation and ruined it in less than 4 years."

So much for the subject of time. On the subject of vision, the story seems more difficult and more delicate. The journalist, an observer from a western European country, stops, perplexed, before the daily course of events

in Egypt, his inner understanding hidden and armored by the atmosphere of Western democracy and its tangible economic results that he has experienced, desiring, sometimes consciously and sometimes, usually, unconsciously, to see a part of it in Egypt.

The second point: For the most part, the Western media are subject to and guided by powerful and intelligent institutions. The journalist coming from there is forced into a corner and might become lost there, unable to get out, this corner being that all of the democratic and cultural standards which the West enjoys are a yardstick that he will put over the heads of the people, in the lobbies of their hotels, or the headlines of their newspapers. After that, he decides how close or far, how high or low Egypt is along the notches of this yardstick.

The geographic clash--also appears to be both contradictory and complementary to the preceding clashes. The Arab journalist who is from Paris is far from Egypt geographically. But, after a few days, he recovers the kinship of language, history, and concerns for shared problems, and he begins the process of geographic melting, feeling, by it, his true distance from Paris (as a journalist and a person). With it begins a stage of counting backwards, which is extremely difficult. This country is part of his large, extensive, fragmented country. And this people, in the final analysis, part of his people, residing in Lebanon, Syria, Palestine or Iraq, and, consequently, its bitter situation and great difficulties automatically enter his personal considerations and his personal concerns, though the one who writes to them from Paris, London or Ankara does not notice or suffer from them.

Therefore, as a result of this condition that afflicted me, I decided to share my writing and my impressions of Egypt, to present them as various selected daily events tied together by only two things: that the subject is only Egypt and that the writer is Arab, a Lebanese who emigrated 10 years ago, who by means of these observations wants to reveal more fully the clashing lines of the subject material and that which is in his mind, trying to discover, at a minimum, candor within himself and general objectivity, hoping that personal emotion--which is abundant--does not overcome the realities.

Therefore, he will try to be patient and not allow these harsh, bitter realities to give him diarrhea or make him escape psychologically and geographically, using the weak argument: "I do not understand anything, and nothing understands me. We have described two worlds that are not susceptible to understanding."

The First Day: Cairo, the Indian Subcontinent

On the plane from Cyprus to Egypt, a young diplomat sat next to me who spends most of his time shuttling between Cyprus, Athens and Cairo.

He asked me "How long has it been since you last visited Egypt?"

I said: "Practically speaking, about 10 years ago, not counting a short, unsuccessful visit after the assassination of al-Sadat in the end of autumn, 1981."

He shook his head and continued: "You will be troubled greatly. Egypt has changed. It is not what it was. Even the people are changing."

I said to him: "I am decided on the trip. I am convinced that I must visit Egypt. I am a journalist. The journalist, like a physician, is not always able to choose his clients or 'his illness.'"

My diplomat friend continued, describing the geographical changes that had occurred in Cairo and the accompanying changes in customs and social relationships, beginning with the difficulty of traffic movement, moving through the impossibility of walking in the streets and ending with the chaotic, excessively high prices that run after you as if they were an apparatus rivaling the Egyptian secret police in the days of their height!

I was listening. I was distracted. I was not concentrating much on the speech of my friend, until the plane landed in Egypt. We proceeded to the entry hall of the airport (concourse number 1, the one designated for Egypt-air). The words of my friend began to evaporate. The hall was clean and new. Its marble floor gleamed. Quiet. The crowds were reasonable, like one would encounter in any of the airports of Europe. I looked at him and said: "It seems that matters are improving?"

He replied, almost embarrassed: "Do not forget that today is Friday. It is not a normal day. In any case, you are still outside Egypt. You will enter it soon." The mu'adhdhin sounded the call to the noon prayer, but there was no change in the movement of the employees and travellers.

As usual, I presented my passport crowned with the cedars of Lebanon. After a few moments, the civil servant set it aside and asked me to "relax" for a while in the concourse. In consideration of my being the "Ibn Battutahr" [medieval Arab traveler and explorer] of airports and accustomed to Arab hospitality, this did not surprise me. I went over to a ("mukandisho") corner and began to study the Egyptian and foreign newspapers. An hour passed. The nerves of my Lebanese merchant neighbor (I recognized him by his cigarette and the way he smoked it) were strained. He interrupted me, nervously: "Wherever has our Western dress confronted us with oppression?"

I said to him, with artificial coolness: "Patience is a virtue. We must put up with it. We are not Austrian citizens, and we have not arrived at the Stockholm airport. It is a case of Arab among Arabs. Take it easy."

Thirty minutes later--that is, after an hour and a half--altogether--the announcer called out our names. We hurried over to him. We reclaimed our passports, gratefully, to a simple question: "Where are you going to stay, God willing?"

I mentioned the name of the hotel to him and he bid us farewell in a friendly and civilized way. The way out of the airport was not the same as the way in. The flourishing features of the labor force began. I was approached by the first demonstrator of his services, he dismissed another. We came to the third and found him conducting us automatically towards his "limousine" taxi.

When I sat down I discovered that it was an ordinary Mercedes--even smaller than usual--and I asked him: "Is 'limousine' the name of your car?"

He answered, with the speed of the Concorde: "Always, sir. This limousine is very powerful, newly carpeted, and has been in service 2 months."

I said to him: "I surrender. If God wills, if God wills, take us to Cairo, to the Nile Hilton Hotel."

The limousine slipped away while my imagination wandered among memories of Cairo and the years of my youth that I had spent in the capital of the Fatimids. Then my Lebanese friend noticed that I was not talking and interrupted me, in French: "Look at the flow of traffic. It is excellent. Better than Paris."

I said: "You are right. It appears that the traffic jams have been exaggerated." A period of silence ensued. I continued to contemplate the new buildings and bridges of Cairo. Suddenly I remembered: "Isn't today Friday, sir? So the normal flow of traffic is excellent because it is not a normal day. It is a legal holiday."

After 30 minutes in all we came to the Nile Hilton. We paid 7 pounds. We thanked the driver and were grateful for his kindness. We entered a new world, the world of the Hilton, which had been dedicated by former president Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir, as the first foreign hotel to be built in his era. Fate willed that he spend his final hours in it, at the small summit conference that was held in the hotel in September, 1970, immediately after the events in Jordan.

The receptionist addressed me in English. I replied, and said to myself, "perhaps it is the rule to speak English in the foreign hotels." The porter was next. He began to grate English into my ear, words and a melody from ("al-tasht qulli, al-tasht qulli").

This raised my blood pressure and I scolded him: "That is foreign. You are not speaking Arabic." He stopped and began to speak to me in Arabic, in a dialect of our brothers and relatives in the area of the Hijaz and its surroundings.

We came to the room. The lobby of the hotel was as it had been in the days of the late Sa'id Fariha, that is, about 20 years previously. The corridors leading to the room had been covered, originally, in green wall-to-wall carpeting. It now resembled a painting of Picasso, augmented with Egyptian dust from the Sahara. Marked by clashing lines. Colored pieces sometimes, plain pieces other times. It transported you, unexpectedly, from the world of the classical and the orderly to the school of the absurd and the cubist, or all at once, to Shubra al-Khayma or to Imbaba Square on the day of the English invasion in 1882.

Our foundation and our wealth lie in two treasures: the great Nile and the radiant African sun. I said to my companion: "If only the French were able to transport the Nile to Paris, how nice, how nice...."

He said: "And the sun?"

I said: "In that case, there would be flies in the hotel lobbies, and the carpeting in the Plaza Hotel would be like that in the Nile Hilton. God gives perfection to no one. He is all-knowing, all-wise. Otherwise why are there daily flights between Egypt and Paris?"

As in my custom when travelling, I decided to take a walk to breathe in the air of Egypt and to enjoy the sun of the Nile during the late afternoon. I took the Nile corniche and went up to the Meridian Hotel, passing the Shepherd Hotel, overlooking, if only in my mind, the area of Garden City, which had been famous until the beginning of the 1970's. The street was nearly empty. There were light posts, but the lights were bashful. I wandered around in the open areas of the Meridian. It was hard for me to see what had become of it. I said: "Let us take a taxi and return to our room on the 'bank of the Nile.'" I motioned with my hand. Someone came up and said: "Taxi?" I nodded my head. The taxi appeared. The door opened. The car got under way. I lit a cigarette. After a few minutes--and a distance of all of a kilometer or a kilometer and a half--I noticed that the meter was off the scale. I asked the driver: "What's with the meter, sir. Is it defective?"

He replied, bragging: "Not at all. We are regulated by the tourism authority."

We came to the entrance of the Hilton, without a meter. I paid him a pound. He glared at me, but I paid no attention. He began to call out, his colleagues crowding around: "What's the story? My official price is 3 pounds, sir."

"Pay the price that you read."

I paid a pound and a half. I learned a first lesson. The taxi is a new thing in Egypt, but the drivers are as belligerent as their French colleagues. I hurried to my room to continue my contemplation and conversation with the Nile and the sun and the roar of the Cairo streets.

That night, as usual, we were guests at a dinner party, which was also attended by a retired diplomat, a "former" security man, the host, the poet Mahmud Darwish and the writer Yusuf Idris. The guests were spread among the tables and the conversation varied among them. The person sitting next to me was an Egyptian artist, whose shows are always and continually opposed. He accosted me with the question: "What are your impressions of Egypt?"

I replied, with pharaonic politeness: "We have just arrived."

He persisted: "In other words, then, impressions are fleeting."

I said: "A strange thing. I do not feel myself in Cairo, or in any other capital. I am still searching for the identity of this city."

He explained to me the changes that had been brought about by the policies of al-Sadat, the dissoluteness, chaos, and theft to which they had led. Then

his imagination wandered a little and he began to observe: "Perhaps the worst phenomenon currently raging in Egypt, for the first time in 100 years, is the dissoluteness of the state, the lack of fear on the part of the civil servant, great or small, junior or senior, for the leaders, as had always been the case." He continued: "Egypt was known from ancient times for its centralized government, that is, for a state authority that was always the most powerful and the most prominent."

I interrupted him: "What causes and disturbances have led to this phenomenon?"

He replied at length. "You will see sights that are unusual in the history of the Egyptian state and the Egyptian mind. Everyone has set up shop for himself, from the traffic policeman, who demands a pound from us and leaves our car in the middle of the street, to the low-level state employee who demands, in a loud voice, "Where is the tip," to the most senior of them. And this has gone higher and higher."

I said: "Has the situation gotten that much out of control?"

He said: "I will tell you about two incidents. The first happened to a mutual friend of ours, and the second was written up in Ahmad Bahjat's column, in an issue of AL-AHRAM. As for the first incident, the gist is this. Our mutual friend became seriously ill. We took her to the charitable hospital, because she was very old. For some reason, known only to God, the old woman died. She was, as you know, the mother of doctor so-and-so, who, in days gone by, had been one of the doctors for the Presidential Palace. His official title was "Pasha." Her grandson went to the hospital with his mother to take her, as is the custom, to bury her. The doctor on duty asked for a certificate of "death by natural cause" and an identity certificate.

"Our mutual friend tried to tell him, in a polite and measured way: 'This is my grandmother. She is so-and-so, the mother of so-and-so.'

"He grew tired of talking. His words disappeared like a puff of wind. In the following days he got in touch with the director of the hospital and then with the minister of health, who was a personal friend of his father. He told them what had happened to him in the hospital. They found the matter shocking. The man was able to sleep that night. On the following day, surrounded by members of the family and a group of friends, he was surprised to have the request repeated. He became angry and cursed. One of his friends came forward and whispered into the ear of the doctor: 'How much do you want. We will pay.'

"He replied, quietly: 'Thirty pounds.'

"The friend paid him the 30 pounds. He came up to our mutual friend to inform him and calm him. Everyone thought that the incident was ended with this paltry little bribe. They signed the papers. The family and the companions waited in the lower hall to receive the body of the old woman. An hour passed. Then another. No body. No nothing. The friend, that is, the one who paid the bribe, went and found the body in the room in the charge of the

hospital attendants. He said to them: 'Why have you not taken the body down and delivered it to the family?'

"One of them replied, with the coldness of the dead: 'Seven pounds, sir, is the price of transporting the body. Do you understand?'

"As for the second incident, Ahmad Bahjat mentioned it in his daily column in AL-AHRAM, in the issue of Thursday, 31 October 1985/17 Safar 1406, under the title, 'A Mysterious Event.' The details are as follows. 'Fa'iq (al-Bar'i) al-Dassuqi, a first-level employee in the central office for administration and regulation, went out on the morning of 17 April 1985 to wait for the car that takes him to his job. In the meantime, he fell unconscious. He was taken to first aid. An employee escorted him to the Bab al-Sha'r-iyah hospital, as is recorded in the hospital's register under number 40421 on 17 April 1985. In inquiring after him at the hospital 3 days later, it was learned that the aforesaid had been treated in the receiving room only. The citizen who took him to the hospital and the doctor who received him confirmed that his condition was extremely bad. He could not have left or moved from the hospital. After searching for him in all of the hospitals and morgues, administrative report number 964 from 25 May 1985 was released against the hospital by the Bab al-Sha'riyah police station, accusing the hospital of disposing of the body after his death.

"The matter has not been settled yet, whether by the police station, the prosecution charged with the investigation or the hospital. Fa'iq (al-Bar'i) al-Dassuqi has disappeared as if the earth has swallowed him. The difficulty is that the missing person had a wife and two baby daughters, one of whom was born after the disappearance of her father.'"

[30 Nov 85 pp 28-29]

[Text] In one episode of an Egyptian television series, the actor Salah al-Sa'dni announced to his wife that the government had given him a raise of 12 pounds in his monthly income of 65 pounds. His wife was delighted and hurried to the calculator to determine the impact of this increase on their standard of living. After a few moments she frowns, then turns lazily and pessimistically toward her husband and tells him, "Your salary has in practice decreased by 9 pounds."

Naturally, the critical play was successful because it combines the very backward elements in Egyptian society with the most modern and scientific devices that have entered Egypt during the open door era. But the result is one: the poor are becoming poorer, because of the tax system, which has not been changed since 1964. The rich are becoming richer because of the lack of legal regulations that bring them to account or go after them. The well-known Egyptian journalist and author 'Abd-al-Salam Dawud criticized this manifestation in one of his weekly articles, revealing three flaws of the "open door state."

The first flaw is the lack of statutory regulation of capital of Egyptian merchants who work in importing. By way of a limited example, the author

mentions that these merchants do not deposit a single piaster in the central bank, which is not even informed about the amounts of money transferred abroad, so that the way is wide open to theft and smuggling of goods and money. This still influences and stamps the Egyptian economy until this very hour.

The second flaw is the exchange rate of the Egyptian pound. It is not reasonable that the currency of a non-socialist country that is striving for capitalism as a means of life and progress is bought and sold at three rates on any given day. The first rate is the official rate, used by banks among themselves according to the value of the American dollar. The second rate is known as the tourist or incentive rate, set at 1.35 pounds per American dollar. Then there is the popular rate--the black market rate--which is more active and moves between 1.75 and 1.85 pounds per American dollar.

The third flaw is the confusion of the state and its failure to face these accumulated problems for 5 years, such that it inspires the people to continue in this nonsensical and inhumane confusion or allows a "big whale" to continue to benefit from the confusion. They say that in its forefront is the "secret group," that is, the drug merchants. In the meantime, the imagination of the people disappears and, perhaps, their conjectures are correct concerning the ministers and deputies and those who are very influential in the Egyptian government.

Gloom

The same evening, one of my Egyptian journalist friends telephoned me. After exchanging the indispensable affectionate pleasantries, I suggested that we spend a little time talking in a Cairo coffeehouse. He agreed, with a silence that I did not understand until after the end of the errand. We went to the coffeeshop of one of the large hotels. The place was large and splendid. We looked right and left, and then I asked my Egyptian friend: "Do you think that the government or the tourism agency has seized all of the beautiful things in public places?"

He did not get the meaning of my question. I repeated it, waving my hand towards the girls serving in the large and splendid coffeeshop. He said: "By God, as do you, I do not understand why they chose the ugliest people for work in public places."

I said, jokingly and apologetically: "Perhaps this contributes to curbing the appetites, and consequently the Ministry of Health has agreed with the Ministry of Tourism, which has reduced the illness of the Egyptian people from indigestion, intoxication, and so forth."

He said, mockingly and hopelessly: "Do you think so?"

After about an hour, I suggested to my friend that we move to a second ("coffeeshop") in the area of Zamalik, insistent that we cover the distance on foot. The Egyptian friend turned towards me as if he were facing a

cosmic disaster, hoping, without saying it, that I would be willing to take a car. But I resisted doing so.

We crossed al-Jala' bridge. We took the al-Jazirah corniche, which would bring us to the Gize Sheraton. To the right of it, we curved towards Zamalik. Alongside the road I did most of the talking. We approached the Sheraton. Suddenly, we saw bulldozers, tractors and sand barricades. He smiled and said: "Over which hole do you want to cross...I agree with you."

I said, interrupting: "Why is gloom part of the development plan?" He did not reply or comment. We entered the dark streets, groping in the ancient manner, until we came to the end of the street and encountered a ("Judu") --that is, ("Judu")--which is the large black taxi.

It seems that gloom has become one of the fixtures of the Egyptian personality, the personality that became known and notorious in the Middle Ages, at least--and of late--for its satirical spirit and its love of the joke. There is some gloom in every Egyptian. The driver is gloomy because the customers do not return to pamper him and tip him. The leftist is gloomy because he sees the ruins of the city and country but has no relation to them. The rightists are not satisfied because of the assassination of al-Sadat, which ended their power and shattered the waves of their hopes, which were ended by too much wealth, too much theft, and too much Americanization.

I waited. I hoped. To no avail. I said: "What should we do? What do you suggest?"

He answered: "Let us take a taxi. It will pick us up and take us to the square by the Arab League. And from there we will walk, sir."

I submitted to the situation. We came to the square by the Arab League. The corniche was 80 percent completed. Half of its pedestrian walkways were paved, half were dirt. I tried to inquire about them. He interrupted me with sweet Egyptian sadism: "This is the only illuminated square in Zamalik. If you go right or left there is no electricity and the streets are dug up."

I said to him: "But why? I left this quarter--my house was in a street branching from the square by the Arab League--20 years ago, and half of the streets were paved."

He replied, with gloomy quietness: "Do not trouble yourself. This is Egypt. Digging and darkness in the streets is a national necessity to spread gloom to each person and throughout the cities and among tourists such as yourself."

The topic of gloom and lack of humor even reached the newspaper columns. In AKHBAR AL-YAWM on 2 Nov 1985 'Abd-al-Salam Dawud wrote in his weekly article titled "Have You Heard This Joke?" asking what had happened "to make the Egyptian people lose their joyful spirit and take the path of gloom."

"Where did the well-known smile go that used to spice up our lives and make us able to take on fierce battles singing? Why the gloom, the resignation and frustration?

"I would understand if comedy died in the richest countries in the world, most of which are more advanced than us. But I would not understand at all if comedy or joking died in Egypt.

"We have forgotten ourselves in the difficulties of the serious search for solutions to our problems. We have forgotten our soul. Is it sensible for us to forget our soul in the face of the most serious challenge, the rebuilding of Egypt?"

Youth

The following day I had an appointment with an elder Egyptian journalist, I had thought, since my youthful days in the profession, that my meeting with him would be a meeting of sifting, of analyzing and sifting what I heard, noted and saw in Egypt.

As is the custom, I described my impressions and what I had heard, concentrating my question for him on two points: Since when had this disarray and this economic and political dualism been present? What had actually happened to the Egyptians to bring about this grief and gloom for the first time in 100 years?

The elder journalist said that in order to understand what is happening in Egypt now, internally and externally, it is necessary to go back to 6 Tishrin al-Awwal (October) 1981, to determination of the reviewing stand incident. From there, the explanation appears. The party of al-Islambuli and the organization of al-Zumur assassinated the president of the regime. Their groups fancied that the entire regime had been assassinated. Something similar happened among the followers of al-Sadat. The parties supporting him or benefitting from the methods of his rule or his regime feared that the new president would be an "Islamic Khomeyni," as had happened in Iran or Pakistan. But what happened was that the two parties emerged from the battle losers. The groups of Islambuli fancied that the passing of al-Sadat caused Camp David and reliance on America to pass with him, and would lead automatically to Egypt's return to its traditional natural place in the Arab and Islamic community.

This was a kind of delusion. Those who were deluded had their hope frustrated. This has had strong impact, from time to time. None of them are master of a single political center. Given this, one can understand the situation of gloom and the situation of disarray and perhaps also the situation of black despair among everyday Egyptians.

It was incumbent that the Egyptian-Arab opening produce more than it has produced. Who is to blame? I do not know! Are the Arab states behind in understanding what is going on in Egypt? Or is the Egyptian leadership delayed in explaining the course of Egyptian affairs to the Arabs, a result

of the legacy of al-Sadat and complications in the domestic and international situation? It should be pointed out that in recent months President Mubarak has exerted notable Arab activity, almost reminding the people of the days of Nasir's Egypt.

In any case, this is the beginning of a new topic.

[7 Dec 85 pp 28-30]

[Text] For more than a month, beginning with the incident of the Italian ship the Achille Lauro on this past 20 October, Egypt has been subjected to a political and diplomatic whirlwind of regional and international dimensions, diminishing whatever else the successor of al-Sadat has faced in terms of importance and reverberations in the last 4 years.

Within a span of 40 days, the regime of President Mubarak faced 2 difficult trials. The first trial was a kind of personal defeat and frustration after the incident of the Italian ship. Immediately after it, the Egyptian news media were compelled to publish a transcript of a speech of the Egyptian president: "How could 4 people hijack a large passenger ship that was in the charge of a crew of at least 350 sailors?" The president added: "There are question marks and exclamation points that will be revealed in a few days."

The second trial was the incident of the hijacking of the Egyptian passenger plane 10 days ago, which ended in a burned wreck in the Valetta airport on the island of Malta after it was stormed by members of the Egyptian commando force.

There were 30 days total between the 2 events. It is as if there is a goal of embarrassing Egypt and making it withdrawal from the course on which it is moving.

What happened in Egypt in recent months to make its president ask about the agent who is the perpetrator of these actions and about the aim to complicate Mubarak's Egypt?

In practice, a number of things happened, particularly on the level of Egypt's relations with all of its neighbors and its fraternal states.

One: Egypt put the brakes on the car that al-Sadat set in motion towards Israel. No reciprocal visits, no embraces, no meetings "to chat" between the presidents of Egypt and Israel in Isma'iliya or Port Sa'id. Even what has been called a "policy of normalization" has been taken to the tomb of the pharaohs in the pyramids. That is, it has been frozen, and there is "no degree of sensation in it." The Israelis know this. Israeli sources describe President Mubarak as "the man who does not like them." Even in the era of al-Sadat, when Mubarak was his vice-president and his close protege, he on more than one occasion shunned meeting with the leaders of Israel, with one exception, when he accompanied al-Sadat on a visit to the Negev. A correspondent for LE MONDE described this trip in this way: "One time President al-Sadat was able to convince his vice-president, Husni

Mubarak, to visit Israeli territory. This was in 1980, when the two men visited the city of Beersheba for several hours. Those who observed Husni Mubarak closely noticed the frown on his face and his gloomy features. In any case, the Israeli leaders are completely aware that the peace with Mubarak's Egypt is a cold, but lasting, peace."

Two: Basic Arab changes occurred. We can sketch them as follows.

1. Intensification of the uproar of the war in Lebanon, to include all fronts and groups, especially including the Palestinian war.
2. Qualitative and quantitative escalation of the Iraq-Iran war and the clear Egyptian role as a supporter of Iraq.
3. The popular revolution in the Sudan, the southern neighbor and fraternal state, which overthrew the government of the sole dictator Numayri and replaced him with a collective democratic leadership based on a popular national alliance with a broad front and deep base.

In the face of these changes, the advisors [text illegible] in Egypt drew up a new type of strategy, which may be summarized in two terms: the open door policy and the dialogue [text illegible], Arab, which form a kind of geographic axis and, as a result of this, reformulate a new strategy for Egypt based on the geographic and historical triangle from which the 23 July revolution of Nasir sought guidance: that is, Arabism, Islam, and Africa. These are the three axes that 'Abd-al-Nasir set down in his celebrated book "The Philosophy of the Revolution."

On the Arab plane and this is the foundation--Egypt has expended extraordinary activity during the past 40 days. It chose the Palestinian problem as a way to return to "the land of the north" [the Levant]. President Mubarak visited 'Amman (on the first of this past October), then 10 days later King Husayn came to Cairo. The Egyptian minister for power and industry was dispatched to Baghdad, Tariq 'Aziz, the Iraqi foreign minister was given an arrival dinner when he came to Egypt, and then 'Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] visited Egypt, delayed a few days by the complications of the event of the Italian ship.

This was in the direction of the Levant. As for the Arabs of North Africa and southern Africa [as published], President Mubarak received a high-level Tunisian delegation, and 24 hours later he received Salah Bil-Qasi, the emissary of the Algerian president. Perhaps the most important African visitor to Egypt during the 40 days between the first Boeing incident and the second Boeing incident was General Siwar-al-Dhahab, the chairman of the Sudanese Supreme Council, who spent 3 days in Egypt. He crowned his visit with a newspaper report in which he emphasized the necessity of the "return of the military--including himself personally--to the barracks after the elections this coming April 1986." This is a matter that will not vanish "with the wind," particularly among the circles of the educated, the opposition, and the bourgeoisie in Egypt.

On the Islamic plane: Egypt has reclaimed a large part of its role. First, by its return as an active member of the Islamic Conference; second, by its support and aid for the fighters in Afghanistan; third, by its sponsorship of the conference on the Sunnah (Tradition) and the biography of the prophet that was held at al-Azhar University during the first week of November; and, finally, by its reception of Ziaul Haq, the president of Pakistan. All this, as we previously said, was in the period between the first and second Egyptian Boeing events.

A Problem in the Sudan, Then?

What is behind this sudden activity, and what steps are anticipated in Egyptian policy?

As usual, there are three answers and three possibilities--if not more--surrounding this big question. I will express them briefly as I heard them from the lips of three Egyptian journalists, diplomats or residents in Egypt.

The first possibility is--as my diplomatic speaker calls it--back to basics. The gist of his opinion is that Anwar al-Sadat practices "jumping in the air." He believed in and wagered on a "pharaonic Egypt," which is a very remote period in history, linking the tombs of Ramses II and Akhnaton and the American White House, heedless or ignorant of the strategic geographic difference for Egypt. When the diplomat coined the word he explained it, explaining its theory as follows: "jumping in the air" means, in the diplomatic lexicon, being ignorant of the theory of the triangle on which the policy of Egypt rests and to which it is fastened. In the manner by which al-Sadat made peace with Israel, he knocked out two--at least--of the three bases: the African and the Arab. Egypt was put into a position isolated from the Arabs by virtue of the fact that, in spite of the fact that 6 years have passed from his "motion-picture" visit to occupied Jerusalem, he has not been followed, and no Arab state has followed in his footsteps.

The African perspective: Egypt has been left exposed by Israeli penetration (of black Africa) and boxed in with regard to the states of Arab North Africa (the Libyan Jamahiriya, Algeria, the Kingdom of Morocco and Mauritania).

The diplomat continues. It is true that the Sudan of Numeiry supported the steps of al-Sadat, as did the Sultanate of Oman, along the Indian Ocean. But these two countries--due to their geographical and economic positions--were not powerful enough to offer help to Egypt. Rather, they were helpless and left al-Sadat in the middle of the path. But the real reason was the fear by these two capitals of cessation of Arab aid to them, particularly from the oil states, especially Saudi Arabia.

The second possibility or explanation is from the lips of an opposition journalist, who said: "Now, in order for us to practice self-criticism of our identity, Egypt--that is, its policy--is suffering from a mental illness

called 'schizophrenia,' which, translated into Arabic, is 'an illness of split or multiple personality.' If childhood is the source of this mental illness, then geography is the cause and agent of Egypt's illness. Egypt has suffered from this illness since the revolution of Muhammad 'Ali and the slaughter of the Mamluks (in the middle of the 19th century). At that time, the geographic framework for Egypt was Islam as represented by Istanbul, that is, the Ottoman emperor.

The policy of Muhammad 'Ali and his descendents caused Egypt to turn towards the Mediterranean, that is, toward Western Europe (at that time, France, to be precise). After the defeat of the Ottomans, the revolution of Mustafa Kamal broke out, which was European in thought, fashion and method. Egypt continued to waiver between the Mediterranean (bordering Europe) and the Red Sea (bordering Yemen and Saudi Arabia) until the end of World War II. When the officers movement broke out on 23 July 1952, 'Abd-al-Nasir repeated Ibrahim Pasha's move, but in reverse; that is, he turned his back on the Mediterranean and decided to move in the direction of the Red Sea (the Yemen revolution) and the northern Sinai, to become involved in the problems of 'the land of the north.'"

The Egyptian journalist adds: "the Egyptian bourgeoisie--which arose from and was influenced by the court of the sultan, following in his step automatically, without thinking, in the era of the thrones of Muhammad 'Ali and his descendents--the Egyptian bourgeoisie derived benefit from the policy of an open door policy and cooperation with the capitals of Western Europe.

"In the era of 'Abd-al-Nasir, it broke up into small groups and withdrew into itself or emigrated.

"In the era of al-Sadat, something of great significance happened for the Egyptian economy. The Egyptian bourgeoisie continued to be oriented toward Western Europe while millions of workers and the poor emigrated to the capitals of the Arab oil states. Sound economic logic would assume completely the opposite."

I interrupted my interlocutor: "You bother me and the readers by this Marxist, Keynesian, psychological, intellectual peregrination. Explain it." He said: "I will explain the matter by referring to the principles of political science. What happened and is happening in the Arab countries, produced a direct affect on the lives and thoughts of Egyptians. I want to single out two areas: the two Arab wars that have left their influence on Egypt. These are the sectarian wars in Lebanon and the Iraq-Iran war, which carry in their folds, in turn, a kind of sectarianism. By this, a kind of sectarian tension was created in Egypt during the last part of the al-Sadat era, tension between the Copts and the Muslims--for the first time in more than 50 years.

"This on the Arab plane. On the purely Egyptian plane, the events in the Sudan and their popular, democratic dimension, awakened Egyptian officials from their lethargy. They discovered, suddenly, that Egypt is surrounded, in fact, not just word. From the west, Libya. From the Red Sea, it is cut off.

From the south--that is, from the Sudan--a deep and broad popular revolution, as the official media has portrayed it. Therefore, Egyptian diplomacy moved quickly to break this encirclement by means of historical allies, in the first case, and geography, in the second case.

"In my estimation," continued the Egyptian journalist, "the Sudanese revolution will impose basic and distinctive changes on Egyptian policy, especially in the type and extent of relations with Ethiopia and the Soviet Union, abroad, and in the ultimate position of democracy, internally."

"The third possibility--or the third explanation--has a parochial character. The person who expounds it is a professor of economics who worked as a minister more than once in the governments of 'Abd-al-Nasir and the early al-Sadat era. He said: "Experience has taught us that whenever the ruler of Egypt faces difficult internal crises, he flees from them to Arab and Islamic meetings. Egypt is suffering from a choking economic crisis. The visible indications of it are these: the foreign debt has reached \$33 billion (whereas the prime minister said that the debt is only \$24 billion); the rate of inflation exceeds 300 percent per year in the years following the 'open door era;' it is known that the illiteracy rate has not fallen below 70 percent; and that the pay of public sector employees (excluding the armed forces) has not risen by more than 25 percent during the same period.

The solution?

"I see no solution on the horizon other than a kind of popular uprising similar to that of 19-20 January 1977. But that will not solve the problem; it will only make it more complicated."

And the democratic party opposition?

My correspondent smiled and answered: "An empty group feeding on the past. It has no relation to what is happening in the street." He continued: "Two urgent dangers threaten Egypt."

The first is the movement of the Islamic groups, which the government has succeeded in fragmenting and whose conflicts it has succeeded in exocerbating.

The second danger is a lesser possibility. It is represented by groups in the armed forces. He says: "They still dream of a political role larger than they had been given so far."

But President Mubarak is aware of these two dangers, or group of dangers mentioned previously. "It is my belief," in the words of the previous Egyptian official, "that the only relief for Egypt is in deepening the domestic democratic experiment by the following means:

"By repeal of all of the emergency laws and by allowing all of the democratic and Islamic tendencies to work in the open.

"By strengthening economic, political and cultural ties with the Arab world.

"This, otherwise...we will fall into the world of South America!"

12780

CSO: 4504/129

LIBYA

BRIEFS

LIAISON BUREAU ENTERTAINS FOREIGNERS--The People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison offered a reception banquet today for the foreigners in the Jamahiriya on the occasion of the new year. The banquet was attended by the heads of the diplomatic missions accredited to the Jamahiriya and a large number of the foreign communities in the Jamahiriya. The member of the People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison, in an address to the attendants, stressed that the permanent and firm relations are the relations among peoples and not among governments. He pointed out that the Libyan Arab people always work toward consolidating and strengthening their relations with all the peace loving peoples of the world. [Text] [Tripoli Television Service in Arabic 2005 GMT 14 Jan 86 LD]

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CS0: 4500/75

TUNISIA

TUNISIAN FOREIGN MINISTER MEETS COUNTERPARTS

PM151043 Tunis L'ACTION in French 10 Jan 86 p 5

[Unattributed report: "Beji Caid Esebsi Has Talks With Heads of Niger, Malian, and Jordanian Delegations"]

[Text] Foreign Minister Beji Caid Esebsi, who is heading the Tunisian delegation to the 16th Session of the Islamic Countries' Council of Foreign Ministers in Fes, had talks on Wednesday morning with the heads of the Niger, Malian, and Jordanian delegations.

Mr Esebsi first had a working session with his Niger counterpart Mahmani Sani Bacou.

The talks concerned bilateral relations and cooperation between Tunisia and Niger. Mr Bacou said his country values the fruitful cooperation it has with Tunisia. This cooperation, which has always been characterized by complete mutual confidence in the two countries' interests will be given new impetus in the coming weeks, he noted.

Mr Caid Esebsi also met with his Malian counterpart while attending the session.

The talks concerned developments in the conflict between Mali and Burkina Faso, and Tunisian-Malian relations.

The Malian minister took this opportunity to express his great respect for the efforts made by Tunisia to ease the tension in relations between his country and Burkina Faso in the recent period.

He also praised the wisdom of President Habib Bourguiba, doyen of the African leaders.

Mr Beji Caid Esebsi also reviewed with Jordanian Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri developments in the situation in the Arab world in general and the efforts and approaches made to improve the atmosphere on the Arab scene.

The meeting also related to the strengthening of Arab solidarity and to the situation in the Middle East.

The two sides agreed on the need to continue meetings at all levels and to step up the effort to consolidate cooperation between the two countries in the various spheres.

All these meetings took place in the presence of Mohamed Amamou, Tunisian ambassador in Rabat.

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CS0: 4500/61

TUNISIAN COMMUNIST PARTY SEEKS ACHOUR'S RELEASE

LD102321 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1203 GMT 8 Jan 86

[Text] TUNIS 8 Jan (KUNA) -- The Central Committee of the Tunisian Communist Party said here today that "it was deeply concerned over and deplored the incarceration of Mr Habib Achour, former secretary general of the Tunisian General Federation of Labor (UGTT), as this violates the most elementary human and democratic values, and constitutes a serious threat to general and individual liberties."

A magistrate court in Sfax, the second largest Tunisian city after Tunis, the capital, had sentenced Mr Achour to a 1-year jail term for breaking into a trade union cooperative office.

The communique by the Central Committee of the Tunisian Communist Party called for the immediate release of Mr Habib Achour and registered its objection to "the escalation of moves to restrict trade union and political liberties.

The committee said that "these restrictions seek to strike at trade union unity, to tame the UGTT and to undermine its independence and power, and prevent it from assuming its national and trade union role, especially the role of defending the purchasing power of the workers in the face of rising living costs and a wage freeze."

The Central Committee of the Tunisian Communist Party voiced "its full support for the trade unionist resistance which is likely to bring about conditions for overcoming the current situation and restoring the activity and influence of the UGTT in the service of the interests of the workers and the homeland."

The Central Committee affirmed that "the crisis currently experienced by the economy and the country as a whole requires a true dialogue, respect for the independence of the UGTT, and a end to restrictions on liberties.

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CSO: 4500/61

TUNISIA

MZALI CHAIRS 9 JAN MEETINGS OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

LD111714 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 0600 GMT 11 Jan 86

[Text] The day before yesterday, Mohamed Mzali, prime minister and minister of the interior, presided over 3 working sessions attended by a number of government officials and senior officials from various government departments. The first meeting was devoted to discussing the harm suffered by Tunisian craftsmen and businessmen as a result of the Libyan side's failure to honor its trade undertakings to these citizens.

On the orders of President Habib Bourguiba, it was decided that the national security fund should grant those people interest-free loans in respect of goods exported or delivered to the Libyan side and for which the Libyan side has failed to settle its account, pending the payment by the Libyan side of its debts to these people.

It has been decided also to extend the period of financing exports for exporters who have prepared goods asked for by the Libyan side and which have not yet been delivered in order to help exporters dispose of these goods in other foreign markets or, if necessary, to sell them on the Tunisian local market as a special concession.

The second session was devoted to the law on military service which has been formulated on the basis of equality of citizens in the performance of their duty of defending the homeland and helping in its development march.

The third session was devoted to provincial reform in the light of the intention to reintroduce provincial councils to supervise provincial development and to boost the powers of governors in their capacity as representatives of the president, so as to enhance development work.

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CS0: 4500/61

TUNISIA

TRADE UNION GROUP SETS CONDITIONS FOR CORRECTING UGTT

LD301947 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1600 GMT 30 Jan 86

[Text] The Administrative Committee of the Tunisian General Labour Federation [UGTT] held a meeting under the supervision of the National Coordination Bureau on Wednesday, 29 January, at the headquarters of the federation in Rue de Grece. It assessed the situation on the trade union scene in light of the latest developments, and set an action program for the coming stage at national and regional levels in the context of the preparations for the extraordinary corrective congress.

Members of the committee exchanged views on these subjects with all frankness and awareness of the great responsibility for the coming stage. They lauded the historic initiative taken by the great combatant President Habib Bourguiba on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the founding of the UGTT in the form of the call which he had entrusted his excellency the prime minister and interior minister to convey to trade unionists of all leanings -- to unify trade unionist activity in the framework of a strong, solid and representative organization that contributes as in the past, alongside national organizations, to the establishment of national options and to winning the challenge of development and progress.

After expressing its regret over the negative nature of the position of the executive bureau, which failed to attend the historic meeting held on this occasion, the administrative committee studied the requirements of the coming stage in the trade unionist domain. It voiced its regret over the failure of all the attempts made by the National Coordination Bureau over more than 2 months to resolve the trade unionist crisis on the basis of sincere cooperation and frank and constructive dialogue in order to correct the trade unionist march and retrieve the organization [UGTT -- FBIS] from perdition. For this purpose, the members of the administrative committee have agreed on the following:

1. Non-recognition of the UGTT Executive Bureau
2. Satisfaction is expressed over trade unionist organs joining the National Coordination Bureau
3. Enabling the National Coordination Bureau to have the latitude to take whatever measure it deems fit;

4. Speeding up the bringing to account of former officials in the executive bureau and in regional and local unions, in federations and in general trade unions;

5. Calling on the regional unions to renew basic trade unions and to hold their regional conferences before the end of March 1986.

6. Convening the emergency corrective congress of the UGTT in the last week of next April, and to set up a national committee to prepare for the congress.

The administrative committee urged the National Coordination Bureau to speed up the publication of the paper [AL-SHA'B] [organ of the UGTT, presently suspended by court order -- FBIS] and lauded the results of the efforts made by the National Coordination Bureau and the General Federation of Transport to increase the wages of the workers of the National Transport Company, the National Company for Rural and Inter-Cities Transport and the Light-Metro Company, on the basis of higher production and better productivity.

The committee recorded with satisfaction Mr Mohamed Mzali's confirmation of the government's care for the needy, and its intention to increase family allowances. The committee urged the government to enter into negotiations on social issues with the National Coordination Bureau as soon as possible in order to improve the purchasing power of workers, and to issue the statutes and joint contracts [between employers and employees -- FBIS] and the [word indistinct] system for the civil service.

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CSO: 4500/71

ISRAEL

OFFICIAL STATISTICS IGNORE ISRAELI ARABS

Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 24 Dec 85 p 10

[Article by Muhammad Mi'arri, member of Knesset]

[Text] There are two nations living in Israel today, the majority--Jewish,. and the minority--Arab. Surprisingly enough, the official statistics and other publications only show one nation, Jewish. The other nation, the Arab, the Palestinian, is simply not there. The Arabs are gone.

More than a year ago, to be precise on 13 September 84, when Shimon Peres presented the national unity cabinet to the Knesset, he stated emphatically that "Israel is the state of those who live in it and the country of the Jewish people." A year later the Knesset passed an amendment to the Basic Law which stated that "Israel is the state of the Jewish people." Not only are the Arab citizens--more than 700,000 of them--not mentioned in this definition, even the wording "the people who live in it," as stated by Peres in his aforementioned speech, disappeared into thin air. This is no accident. This is a planned, calculated policy.

Fact: On page 30 of the Annual Statistical Publication, referring to 1983, there is a table regarding Israel's population. The figure mentioned is 4,184,500, of whom 3,436,100 are Jews. Who are the others? The publication describes them as non-Jews. Who are those non-Jews? Turks? Germans? Swedes? Or maybe British? It was not explained.

This author set out to protest this confusing of the issues, this misleading attempt, this distortion, with his proposal for an amendment to the Statistics Act. He proposed to add a section to the existing law according to which "details pertaining to a person's nationality, ethnic origin or religion, which are compiled according to the existing law, will be compiled, edited, reported and published explicitly, not by way of a negative mention, a footnote, or some exclusion." This is not a revolutionary, radical proposal which members of Knesset may have difficulties in accepting and adopting. It is but a minor, reasonable amendment, which every member of Knesset, with the exception of maybe one, is able, and should support. As it turned out the author was in for a surprise.

When he looked the statistics over, the author recalled a well-known African personality, the late Patrice Lumumba. The man who became a symbol for the struggle of the Africans for self-determination and human rights, once told of a humiliating experience that remained with him throughout his life. "I once worked in a drug store," he used to tell. "One day a white man came in, looked around, and muttered, 'I see there is no one here,' and he walked out."

Religion not Nationality

We are not dealing with a drug store and an unknown racist. On page 31 of the above annual publication there is a table dealing with population growth. Again, the division is by Jews and non-Jews. On page 34 there is a table dealing with "population by region and group." Again, the same delineation. This goes on throughout the publication: population by age, by form of settlement, etc. In those places in that publication where there are any details at all given about Arabs, it pertains only to their religion, not their nationality. For example, in the tables dealing with birth rates, that infamous "demographic problem," the non-Jews are defined as Muslims, Christians, Druze, and others. There is an obvious lack of courage to call them Arabs. There are not two nations in Israel, but there are four religions.

How many families in Israel own a gas stove, a refrigerator, a washing machine, a vacuum cleaner or a car? The answers can be found in the different statistics. Even these tables are divided along the lines of Jews and non-Jews. There is, apparently, a national vacuum cleaner, on the one hand, and an anonymous vacuum cleaner on the other hand. There is a Jewish car and a non-Jewish car. Fact.

Until Umm-el-Fahm was finally declared a city, there were exactly two Arab cities in Israel, Nazareth and Shfar'am. They are not mentioned in the Statistical Publication. It says there that there are 37 cities in Israel, 24 of which are established Jewish cities and 11 are new Jewish cities. Adding and subtracting leaves two unidentified cities. How many Arab villages are there in Israel? There is no mention of that. One has to perform a similar mathematical exercise in order to arrive at the number of those anonymous villages. Anonymous, according to the government, is synonymous with Arab.

The chapter on welfare does not distinguish between Jews and Arabs. The reason is simple. Any such distinction would immediately expose the discrimination against Arabs in all that pertains to welfare and other budgets. On the whole the official statistician is consistent in attempting to erase the Arab, physically, emotionally, materially, and spiritually. For example: The chapter that deals with culture and entertainment includes data on the number of books that were published in Israel--so many books dealing with literature and poetry, so many art books, education and natural science, so many Judaica books. There are details on other religions. Which religions? This remains a riddle. The same chapter also has details on newspapers in Israel. There are numbers on Hebrew newspapers and on English newspapers. The Arab newspapers do not show up at all. They are all bundled with "other language" newspapers. Someone has ignored the fact that Arabic, not English, is the second official language in Israel. Someone seems to have

forgotten that 700,000 Israeli citizens identify themselves as being members of the Arab people, the Palestinian Arab nation.

8646

CSO: 4423/76

ISRAEL

ISRAEL TRANSFERS TO NEW SHEKEL

Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 24 Dec 85 Financial Supplement pp 9, 12

[Text] On 1 January 1986 the Israeli economy was to transfer officially to the new sheqel. All checks, books, receipts, and payments were to be transferred to the new coinage. Anyone continuing writing checks, for example, in old terminology, would lose a lot of money as a result, since it would mean an amount 1,000 times what it was meant to be. This is also true for merchants who may write a receipt in old terms rather than the new ones, or supermarket clerks who might mark prices in old sheqels and thus mislead customers who pay with new sheqels...

It turned out that what was defined by the finance minister as but a "technical step" might cost the economy millions of dollars--the cost of modifying all bookkeeping systems, computers, and automatic cash registers.

Those doing the actual modification of cash registers and computers were already celebrating. They had more work than they could handle. There were those who feared that they might not be able to meet the deadline of 31 December.

In the meantime the new sheqel had already created a new source of income: "technicians" who modify cash registers. They went from one store to another, offering their services, for much lower rates than those asked by service agents and importers of those cash registers. The latter charged between IS50,000 and IS150,000 (old) per cash resister, on the average. The "technicians" were willing to do the job for half the price.

Adir Vermus of Mitvakh, importers of NCR cash registers, divided the equipment his company's clients have into two categories, the the first of which the client could transfer himself or herself. Instructions were sent to those clients at no cost.

Transfer Is Easy

The other cash registers needed the work to be performed by the technical branch. The rates varied between IS24,500 for a rather simple machine, to IS300,000 for transferring a large central system, where parts for printers

had to be replaced. For example, the systems found in chain stores are of the latter category.

Mitvakh people also encountered customers with old equipment that could not be modified at all. These customers had no choice but to get new cash registers. The average model went for about IS1 million (old).

According to Dr Avraham Meydan of Hashavshevet, service bureaus were also celebrating. They were called on to modify computer programs in businesses of all sorts which had already computerized their operations. There were all kinds of stories on rates charged by these outfits. The highest figure quoted was \$5,000 for modifying one system.

Dr Meydan claimed that this was an outrage. Modifying a program to the new sheqel, according to him, was "easy as pie" and required at most 2 hours worth of work. This is the kind of expense that any service bureau worthy of its name could absorb, or at least charge just a minimal fee. Hashavshevet distributed to its 900 customers, free of charge, diskettes with the modified new programs.

Price "Guns" from Japan

Many workers were required to put in extra time in transferring to the new coins. They were not all happy. Alon Reis was happy as early as 24 December. He imports price "guns" from Japan and produces the labels in Israel. In December sales of the labels went up by 50 percent. He sold millions of labels, from several thousands to small stores to hundreds of thousands to the chain stores. The price of a package of 1,000 labels is between IS1,300 and IS1,400.

During the same months sales of the "guns" went up by about 30 percent, all attributed to the new coinage. The most popular models were the cheap ones, priced at IS106,000 (old) per unit. A more sophisticated model, priced at IS200,000 (old), which can print both new and old prices simultaneously, did not turn out to be very popular.

Alon Reis's Japanese suppliers were very happy about the upcoming birthday of the sheqel. As a gesture they shortened delivery schedules. If he continues to order at this rate, they might even give him a discount. Anyone reading this can start planning a transition to the zuz [ancient currency]...

Some officials who were approached by this author were surprised to find out that the cost of the transfer was so high. For example, the HaMashbir LaTzarkhan chain discovered that the new sheqel is not all that cheap. The chain bought no less than 12 million labels. All 200 cash registers had to be modified. It turned out that 10 of them were not modifiable and new ones had to be acquired at a price tag of tens of thousands of dollars.

The chain was also planning to spend a lot of money on training, advertising, and even new graphics for gift certificates. All told the arrival of the new sheqel at HaMashbir was to be to the tune of IS100 million (old), or \$70,000.

The PX was quoting similar figures. At the Co-op the expenses were estimated at \$400,000. When the author questioned the figure she was told that "it is a complicated project." Starting with modification of the cash registers, hours of instructions for employees, new directives for managers and many more hours in warehouses and at the shelves.

EGED spokesman Gid'on Talmir was surprised to find out that the transfer to the new sheqel would cost his company no less than IS100 million (old), or \$70,000. The expense was to be divided up into 180 training days for drivers, modifications of the computer programs, changes in the forms and, of course, destruction of the old tickets and issuance of replacement tickets. No wonder that Dan, which had a large supply of tickets and discount tickets with the old denominations, decided to let its passengers continue using the old tickets so as to save money.

Updating of cash registers and prices was a job that not only chain stores and bus companies had to do. Avraham Birenbaum, secretary of the Jerusalem Merchant Association, felt sorry for owners of button shops or jewelry stores who had to update prices on a large number of small items.

Yehoshu'a Nahari, chairman of the Tel-Aviv Merchant Association, shuddered at the thought of the thousands of cash registers which had to be modified. In his estimate there were a total of about 50,000 cash registers of all varieties in the Dan Region. About two thirds of these could be modified by the owners themselves. He estimated that about 15,000 cash registers were so old that they could only be converted by professionals. Some would have to be replaced at a cost of IS300,000 to IS1 million (old), depending on the type of cash register and its sophistication.

The Merchant Association requested of the Industry and Commerce Ministry a period of 2 months to complete the conversion, so as to facilitate the transition for merchants.

[Box on p 9]

Doing away with the old sheqel, by crossing out 3 zeroes, may turn out to be very costly, sometimes millions of sheqels, for anyone making a mistake in the conversion of the old sheqels to new sheqels and agorot.

A young lady just purchased an item at the Shalom department store for IS18,000 (old), and chose to pay by check. The problem was that she already had a new checkbook and because she was not yet used to the new terminology she wrote, both in words and in numbers, IS18,000. She was shocked when the cashier pointed out to her that that meant IS18 million (old). Ironically, the young woman was a bank teller...

The chain stores, banks, and the Israeli Consumer Association were expecting many such mistakes. 'Ada Levanon, general manager of the association warned: "Pay attention to amounts on checks. Any mistake may be very expensive, a thousand times more expensive."

Further warnings were issued for pre-dated checks. By law, pre-dated checks, quoted in old sheqels, if deposited before 1 January, were to be converted by the banks to new sheqels. But those checks deposited after 1 January need not be honored by the banks. The Israeli Consumer Association was expecting a rash of calls from suppliers who forgot to deposit pre-dated checks, requesting that they be converted to new checks.

The association warned consumers not to replace old checks with new ones before obtaining the old checks. A receipt was not to be considered sufficient. Anyone not careful might end up paying twice for the same item.

Since banks planned on closing from 31 December to 2 January in the afternoon, in order to gear for the transition, employees who were to be paid at the end of the month were advised to arrange with their employers to be paid a day in advance. This is what the Israeli Consumer Association was going to do with its employees.

8646

CSO: 4423/75

ISRAEL

DRUG ABUSE IN IDF DISCUSSED

Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 26 Dec 85 p 17

[Text] The problem of pot smoking among IDF soldiers is, apparently, one of the best kept military secrets. Although the issue resurfaces quite regularly, once every few weeks, the IDF authorities refuse to discuss the problem or help expose its extent.

On 24 December it was Knesset members who brought the matter to public attention. The Knesset Audit Committee, which heard evidence from IDF experts, was shocked to hear that about 10 percent of all soldiers who underwent tests to find drugs turned out to be drug users. It should be pointed out that this is not 10 percent of all IDF soldiers, but 10 percent of those who were examined, and they are not necessarily a representative group. But even these data, as reported, should be of concern.

The IDF itself--which is adamant about not discussing the problem--does a lot in order to resolve it. But with all that is done, the number of pot users has not decreased substantially. Fact: In the past year there were 9,569 urine samples taken. Of these, 778 were found to be suspicious and charges were filed. This was a decline compared with the previous year when 800 drug charges were filed. The chief military defender admitted to the committee that the number of cases brought to court does not reflect the extent of the problem, which is much more prevalent.

Several weeks ago a news conference for military correspondents was held with chief of the Military Police, Brig Gen Emil Elimelekh, who discussed many activities of the force under his command. When he was asked about drugs he refused to comment and said nothing.

It is difficult to point to centers of drug use within the IDF, or to a specific population which is prone to it. Instinctively one might suspect soldiers in support units more than those in combat units. But this is not the case. Soldiers of combat units were also caught smoking pot, especially in Lebanon. Similarly, it is not only "weak" segments of the population. Several weeks ago three women soldiers of the IDF radio station were brought to court for drug related charges.

Facts point to an increase in drug usage after the Yom Kippur War, when it was decided to recruit even problematic youths. Up to that time the IDF did without them. There was a sharp increase in drug abuse after the Lebanon War. The facts point to increased smuggling to the IDF as a result of the prolonged stay in the Lebanese quagmire. There has been a corresponding increase in the number of drug cases brought to court.

The most prevalent drug in the IDF has been, and still is, hashish. It is the easiest to obtain and it is not addictive. Hard drugs, such as heroin, are very rare, although there has been an increase in heroin utilization, also after the Lebanese War, perhaps because it became easier to obtain.

The excuses used by those on trial have also become cliches. Tension, boredom, a nerve wrecking routine, fear, incitement by friends, social norms --all these are used by soldiers as arguments. The military judges do not tend to be lenient. The sentences meted out are for 5 or more years in jail.

Chief of Staff Lt Gen Moshe Levy, follows the war against drugs at close hand and personally guides those who deal with the problem. The IDF is also working on improving the methods to track down drug abusers and is devoting more resources to this painful problem. It is only a pity that nothing has been done about the rumor mill by publishing complete and correct information on the extent of the problem. After all, it behooves everyone to know who and what the IDF is fighting.

[Box on p 17]

Urine Test Upon Command

The brunt of the war against drugs is borne by two IDF units: the Military Police and the military court system. The former do everything in order to prevent and apprehend, while the latter is responsible for trying and penalizing the guilty.

Most of the work of the Military Police is based on intelligence, an effort which has increased of late. In addition to intelligence, from within the bases and from without, there is a unit for special investigations, which conducts raids at hospitals and other places, where, according to information, drugs are hidden. Trained dogs also help the IDF in its war against drugs. Recently they were employed primarily at crossing stations on the Israeli--Lebanese border.

When a suspect is apprehended, he is held and has to undergo a urine test. Following cases where soldiers refused, the law has been amended and soldiers are now required to undergo the test when so told. A soldier who refuses can be held until he gives a sample in order to determine whether he hid the drug or used it. If he still refuses he can be ordered to exercise until nature has its way and the drug is discovered.

8646

CSO: 4423/75

ISRAEL

AIDS, DRUGS AFFECT KIBBUTZ VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 26 Dec 85 p 7

[Text] Galil and Jordan Valley kibbutzim are worried and frustrated following the disclosure that in one kibbutz there were men found who were carrying AIDS anti-bodies, and that they had had sexual relations with a volunteer woman from Europe who stayed at the same kibbutz.

Hanna Neyman, coordinator of the inter-kibbutz health committee, intends to consult Prof Ze'ev Hendzel, chief of the AIDS clinic at Kaplan Hospital in Rehovot, which has been conducting a follow-up on the woman volunteer. She intends to request of him that the name of the kibbutz where the woman had stayed be made known to her.

"The rumors are causing us a lot of damage. I know that there is an obligation to maintain a patient's privacy. Her name does not interest me. I only want to know where she lived for a whole year so we can be more alert there," explained Ms Neyman.

There was an error in a report published in YEDI'OT AHARONOT on 25 December. Unlike what was reported, AIDS anti-bodies were not discovered in blood samples of half of the men of the kibbutz, but in blood samples of half of the men who took the test. Thus the number is much lower than was first reported. Hanna Neyman said on 25 December that she talked to the nurses in all northern kibbutzim and that they had told her that no one approached them to be given an AIDS test.

Recently kibbutz members published letters in internal papers and requested that volunteers be made to take an AIDS test. In these letters members complain that volunteers create problems of drunkenness, drugs, inter-marriage and more. It should be pointed out that the woman volunteer in question was a drug user. It was also reported that the United Kibbutz Movement (TAKAM) decided to cut its volunteer program for the coming year by 50 percent.

8646

CSO: 4423/75

ISRAEL

BRIEFS

YEMENI IMMIGRATION--The Egyptian newspaper AL-WAFD reports that Israel intends to initiate the immigration of the 6,000 North Yemen Jews. Israel approached the secretary general of the United Nations asking him to intervene in order to facilitate the emigration of Jews from North Yemen. The newspaper, quoting diplomatic sources, reports that the United States has recently increased aid to Yemen in order to encourage the latter to respond favorably to the Israeli request. As AL-WAFD reports, "The United States employed the same method in order to force the former Sudanese president, Ja'afar Numayri, to agree to use the Sudan as a stopover for Ethiopian Jews on their way to Israel." [Text] [Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 24 Dec 85 p 5] 8646

SECOND TV CHANNEL--Prime Minister Shim'on Peres instructed Justice Minister Moshe Nisim to push the legislation regarding the second TV channel, which was presented by the communications minister, so as to have it voted on by the Knesset within 1 month. In a discussion held at the prime minister's office in the Knesset building, Communications Minister Amnon Rubinstein raised the issue of the unauthorized TV stations operating throughout the country, especially in the north. He said that within a short time it will be possible to receive television broadcasts from satellites, especially from Arabsat, which is expected to carry hostile broadcasts from Arab countries. The communications minister explained that the public is very anxious to have additional channels and this is why the activities of cable TV are so successful. He said that the legislation regarding the second channel will also address cable TV, which is to be placed under public supervision. The establishment of a second channel will reduce the demand for television broadcasts from neighboring countries. [Text] [Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 24 Dec 85 p 2] 8646

MINIMUM WAGE INCREASED--Representatives of the Histadrut and the Coordinating Committee of Employers signed an agreement on minimum wage in the private sector on 23 December 85. The agreement was reached following long weeks of negotiations, in the course of which the general secretary of the Histadrut tried to propose a law which would ensure that the minimum wage will not fall below half of the average rate in the market. Minimum wage in the private sector, which stands now at only IS230,000, will be raised to that in the public sector, namely IS270,000. On 1 March it is to go to IS315,000, which is to include the two raises planned for all employees (4 percent and then 3.5 percent in the next two pay periods). It will not include the cost of living

raise due in February. The chairman of the labor committee in the Industrial Council, Avi Pilosof, said that under present conditions this is the maximum that industry can afford. The chairman of the union division of the Histadrut, Hayim Hartzfeld, was more reserved. He pointed out that the Histadrut considers the agreement to be only an interim agreement and is looking forward to renewed negotiations in April. [Text] [Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 24 Dec 85 p 15] 8646

DRILLING FOR OIL--A second well is to be drilled in Hakarmel in the next few months. The drilling is to be performed by Israel Moriya Technologies. The specialized equipment is now on its way to Israel. The site was set near the Elyakim junction on the northeastern slopes of Hakarmel. This is a second well to be drilled based on a survey of potential oil deposits done by photographs from satellites. The survey is performed based on photographs done with special filters. These give each type of soil a different color. Among other things it turned out that oil fields can also be located utilizing these photographs. Based on this survey Moriya has already started drilling at Eliyahu 1 near the Muhraka. The drilling had to be suspended after reaching a depth of 2,500 m because of lack of adequate equipment. Moriya has not abandoned the site and hopes to continue to a depth of 4,000 m. [Text] [Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 24 Dec 85 pp 1, 14] 8646

CSO: 4423/75

AFGHANISTAN

ROAD CONSTRUCTION PROJECT DISCUSSED WITH USSR

Kabul HEYWAD in Dari 27 Oct 85 p 2

[Text] According to the agreement of 1981 between the Public Works Ministry of the DRA and the USSR's Technostroyexport for the construction of transport networks throughout the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan by the year 2000 the legitimacy of this extensive project was successfully defended yesterday afternoon in a meeting between the relevant representatives of the two pertinent ministries.

Through this extensive project the total length of roads throughout Afghanistan will reach 18,800 kilometers of which 2,473 kilometers will be paved by asphalt, 5,919 kilometers will be gravel roads and 10,408 kilometers will be crushed rock and sand-bedded roads. This project is planned to be completed in three phases. The first phase will last until 1990, the second phase will start in 1991 until the year 2000 and the third phase will begin in 2001. The first phase will connect the provinces with the capital and other major shipping destinations on the river which constitute the jugular vein of Afghanistan. The second phase will connect the provincial capitals with the districts and sub-districts, and the third phase comprise the local interconnective and access roads and streets.

In the meeting which was held to defend the project the pertinent specialists from the appropriate ministries of the DRA and their counterparts from the USSR's Technostroyexport Transport Network Division under the leadership of Viktor Timofeyevich, who defended the execution of the project, were present.

According to another report, Nazar Mohammad, minister of public works, together with the deputy financial counselor of the USSR Embassy in Kabul, talked with the members of the delegation of the USSR's Technostroyexport Transport Network Division about certain other subjects which are of interest to two nations.

12719
CSO: 4665/22

AFGHANISTAN

BANKS PROVIDING LOANS TO PROMOTE EXPORTS

Kabul HEYWAD in Dari 29 Oct 85 p 4

[Text] After the victory of the glorious Sawr revolution the activities of the Export Development Bank have been intensified and expanded ever more of which the existing figures and available documents bespeaks the very fact of the matter.

HEYWAD's correspondent had a conversation with one of the directors of the Export Development Bank which will appear below.

As regards the question of the volume of the import and export loans provided by the Export Development Bank, the above-stated source said. During the first four months of 1364 [21 March 1985 - 20 March 1986] the Export Development Bank has provided a total of 188.83 million afghanis of import loans and 325.31 million afghanis of export loans. Furthermore, it should be added that the said bank also extends export loans to other banks in order to create the possibility for the exportable products of the country such as raisins, almonds, sesame, linseed(flaxseed), cotton, Karakul lamb pelt, hand-woven rugs, herbs and cereals. Likewise, according to the loan bills and relevant regulations the aforementioned bank provides the necessary assistance regarding the export of processed raw materials and packaged products, and similarly in order to facilitate the import of certain allowable goods the volume of the loans provided by the bank in question has taken an upward swing every year.

The source went on to add: From the time that all the banks became nationalized, each specific bank has sought to focus its activity on certain specialized areas pertaining to its specific sector. For instance, in the industrial sector the Industrial Development Bank, in the agriculture sector the Agricultural Development Bank and in the trade sector the Commerce Bank all play a special role.

The Export Development Bank, which is considered one of the commercial banks of the country, according to the particular area of its specialty services provides trade and industrial credits to the single proprietorship institutions, various companies and cooperatives based on the pertinent loan bills and regulations. Furthermore, it should be noted that the future export and import loan plans of the said banks have been duly predicted and that their feasibility is controlled by the director of the central bank every three months.

Moreover, the above-stated source added: The Export Development Bank began its

activities in the first half of 1355 [21 March 1976 - 20 March 1977] with an initial capital of 100 million afghanis with the objective of providing credit and financing to the exporters.

In order to carry out marketing research overseas, the aforementioned bank does not have a representative branch in foreign countries and it is only through pertinent reports in the financial and banking field which it receives from other countries that it has established and developed its connection with reputable banks of the world.

12719

CSO: 4665/22

AFGHANISTAN

WATER, LAND REFORM EXPANDING

Kabul HEYWAD in Dari 30 Oct 85 p 2

[Text] Some time ago the joint commission of the Central Committee of the PDPA and the Council of Ministers of the DRA held a special session under the chairmanship of Babrak Karmal, the general secretary of the PDPA Central Committee and president of the DRA Revolutionary Council on water and land reform and investigated the situation of land reform throughout the country. In this session the considerable improvements and the rapid success of the project was noted and taking into account the present progress in the operation of land reform and the existing difficulties in this project, regarding the elimination of the deficiencies and strengthening and expansion of the democratic land and water reform project throughout the country, HEYWAD correspondent had an interview with a source from the Land Reform and Agriculture Ministry and Land Reform Department which will appear below:

In order to improve the conditions and implement the land and water reform, fruitful and far-reaching efforts have been undertaken and technical, training and propaganda delegations travel to the various provinces every now and then and investigate the process of land and water reform. It is through this means that problems of the operation groups are eliminated and through cooperation with the commissions in charge of the implementation of land and water reform, any and all probable difficulties are resolved. Furthermore, in an effort to enhance the level of technical knowledge of the members of the operation groups, officials from the office of land and water reform and other pertinent representatives from the agricultural sector take part in holding special seminars in the provinces in order to familiarize the interested parties with the rules and regulations of the land and water reform.

As regards the recent improvements in the area of land reform the above-stated source went on to say: The relevant investigations which have been carried out in the various provinces indicate that in the areas where technical and material assistance operation groups have been active in distributing chemical fertilizer, the improved crop seeds, pesticides and herbicides, extending farm credits and mechanized relevant services to the farmers and the land owners, the implementation of the land and water reform project has met with positive results in attracting the farmers, so much so that in the provinces of Kabul, Parvan, Balkh, Qonduz, Jowzjan, Nangarhar, Helmand, Ghazni and Vardak the validity of this matter is most evident. In fact this matter proves the righteousness of the valuable guidelines of Babrak Karmal, general secretary of the PDPA Central Committee

and president of the DRA Revolutionary Council, who in the recent session of the Central Committee of the PDPA and the Council of Ministers of the DRA stated: Extending material and technical aid to the farmers by the government is one of the most effective ways in attracting them to the revolution... It is for this reason that the current year ought to be a year for providing basically improved technical and material assistance to the farmers.

Regarding the activities of operation groups in other provinces the aforementioned source said: The result of the activities of the operation groups in charge of the implementation of the land and water reform indicate that there has been considerable improvements in the process of land and water reform in the provinces of Jowzjan, Helmand, Ghazni, Konarha, Takhar, Nangarhar, Qonduz and Balkh.

Moreover, in the provinces of Badakhshan, Faryab, Kapisa, Qandahar, Kabul and Paktia, Gardiz and Khowst the activities of the abovementioned groups are carried on in a moderate fashion. We hope that through the means of this process the relevant organs of land reform will take appropriate practical measures in implementing the project so as to provide us with a better opportunity to achieve ever greater victories in the area of the democratic land and water reform and carry to fruition this most fundamental task of the Sawr revolution with glory and pride.

12719

CSO: 4665/22

BANGLADESH

REPORTAGE ON LAUNCHING OF NEW JATIYA DAL

Officials, Declaration

Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 2, 3 Jan 86

[2 Jan 86 pp 1, 8]

[Text]

Jatiya Dal, a new political party brewed out of the five-party Jatiya Front: emerged into the national political scene yesterday.

Works Minister Prof M. A. Matin, who was chosen as its Secretary General, formally announced the birth of the new party at a press conference at the Jatiya Front office.

The Jatiya Front partners, BNP (Shah), UPP (Zafar), Muslim League (Siddiky) and Ganotantrik Party, which joined the alliance supporting president Ershad's programme, merged themselves into the new party.

The new party would not have a chairman. A collective leadership of 21-member presidium would run the organisation as the highest policy making body. A 59-member national executive committee was also announced by Prof. Matin. He was the first Secretary General of the Janadal when it was born out of splinter groups and individuals from BNP, JSD, Democratic League and other parties on November 27, 1983.

The merger process of the Jatiya Front resulted in splits in two of its components. Shah Azizur Rahman stayed out of the new Party, and as for the BML (Siddiky), whose president Justice B.A. Siddiky resigned the party post to take up his job as permanent representative of Bangladesh at UN, the new party chief Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury, Minister for Relief and Rehabilitation

joined it. But Begum Razia Faiz, and other BML leaders opposed the merger and retained their faction of the party. The Secretary General of Janadal Largest faction of Jatiya front Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, whose name tops the list of presidium members, was conspicuous by his absence in the press conference.

Prof. Matin who announced the name of 18 members of the Presidium said that three more members would be included in the supreme organ of the new party.

When a newsman drew his attention to a poster of the new party with President Ershad's portrait, he said that the president's ideology and programme of reforms inspired the new party and its formation. But he said that he was unable to say when President Ershad would join it.

Facing a volley of questions from the newsmen, Prof Matin, a former Home Minister and a Health Minister under President Satter and President Ziaur Rahman, said that the new party wants to unite all the democratic, nationalist and patriotic forces under the banner of a single party with a national democratic programme. Outlining the objectives of the party, he said that because of a weak political, economic and social infrastructures in many newly independent, Asian African and Latin America nations, the development of democratic politics and economy

was hindered. To attain the political and economic goals, and ensure social stability for development in our country, it was necessary to forge unity among all political and social forces and the patriotic armed forces under a democratic structure, he pointed out.

Regarding the immediate tasks of the party, the declaration read out by Prof. Matin pointed out that to facilitate the transition from martial law to a constitutional rule peacefully it wants the holding of elections as fast as possible under the relevant provisions of the suspended constitution. It wants the total revival of the suspended constitution after the national polls are held and martial law is wrapped up following the first session of the parliament.

Prof. Matin was, however, quick to add that the new party would not be a BKSAL type single entity as we believe in multi party democracy."

The new party's defence policy, among other things, underlines the need for involving the armed forces in nation building and development activities.

The other immediate tasks of the party is to take all possible measures to hold the elections under a free and fair atmosphere squeezing of administrative wings of the martial law, Winding up of martial law courts, summary martial law courts and military tribunals, gradual restoration

of fundamental rights under suspended constitution and writ jurisdiction of the high court and release of all patriotic prisoners before the polls.

But the new party's Secretary General parried the answer when he was asked whether he considered Lt. Col (rtd) Faruqur Rahman a leader of August 15 1975 change over, a patriotic political prisoner.

Prof. Matin told newsmen that his party wanted both the parliament and presidential elections under the suspended constitution by April this year. Whichever elections take place earlier presidential or parliamentary.

as decided by the President, we shall take part in it. He expressed the optimism that his party would sweep the polls.

About the demand for a non-partisan government to conduct the polls, he said "wheat her we shall remain as ministers, the question remains the prerogative of the President to decide." He added that if the opposition places its demand "we shall consider it."

Regarding lifting of martial law before the polls, he said that elections could not be held if martial law was lifted before as it would leave a vacuum.

When a newsman pointed out the absence of Shah Azizur Rahman, chairman of his faction of BNP and a member of the Jatiya Front Steering Committee from the list of presidium members and from the press conference, he left the question for Shah Aziz to answer. But he added, "the BNP was with us," pointing out the inclusion of Shah Aziz led party's Secretary General and Vice-Chairman Mayeedul Islam and Sultan Ahmed Choudhury, both members of the Council of Ministers in the presidium.

He also said that he was unable to say anything about the absence from the press conference of Mizanur Rahman Choudhury, Secretary General of Janadal and member of the presidium.

Prof Matin was flanked by

Member-Secretary of the National Executive Committee of the party and State Minister for Information Anwar Zahid who announced earlier the dissolution of the front and merger of its components into the new party. The leaders of the five parties were present at the press conference. They are Mesbahuddin Ahmed Babul, Salahuddin Kader Choudhury, Maudud Ahmed (individual member of the front steering committee), Air Vice-Marshal (rtd) Aminul Islam, Humayun Rashid Chowdhury, Anisul Islam Mahmud, Sultan Ahmed Chowdhury, Mayeedul Islam, M.A. Sattar, Sirajul Hossain Khan, Korban Ali, Justice Nurul Islam, Shah Moazzem Hossain, Kazi Zafar Ahmed and Reazuddin Bhola Mia.

The press conference started an hour behind schedule as Prof Matin came 55 minutes late along with Kazi Zafar Ahmed, Mayeedul Islam, Jamal Haider and Shafiqul Ghani Swapan.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Works Minister, Prof. M.A. Matin, Secretary General and the State Minister for Information, Mr. Anwar Zahid are members of the National Executive Committee of the party. Mr. Anwar Zahid is the Member Secretary of the National Executive Committee.

Prof M A Matin said that there would be a 601 member national committee of the new party comprising representatives from all the components of the now defunct National Front.

Explaining the socio-economic and political condition obtaining in the country, the Jatiya Party declaration said it felt the situation could be faced only by national unity and an elected democratic government by active participation of the people.

Referring to the events during the past two and a half years in the country the declaration said anti-democratic forces were getting rehabilitated by taking advantage of disunity among the nationalist and patriotic forces who failed to adopt

a balanced approach. Such attitude of the nationalist and patriotic forces had led the nation to chaos and economic backwardness, political instability and hindered the path to the transition to democracy. "Such a situation should not be allowed to continue. This is crucial test for all the democratic and nationalist forces," the declaration added.

With this objective condition of the country, the Jatiya Party declaration said it felt the need to bring about unity among the political and social forces and patriotic defence forces in a democratic framework to ensure realising political and economic objectives, social stability and progress in the country.

The declaration said the need of the hour is to overcome the decisive trend among the democratic, nationalist and patriotic forces and unite and consolidate them under a political party having a democratic programme. Being encouraged by this realisation, the declaration said, all the components and individuals belonging to the defunct National Front unitedly decided to form the Jatiya Party, a new political organisation.

According to the declaration, the Jatiya Party will be run under ten basic principles in the state, political and economic fields. The basic principles include to bring about a national consensus in all the basic state issues, ensure independence and sovereignty, launch uncompromising struggle against all sorts of hegemony and expansionism and their agents preserve the ideals of 1971 independence struggle and give honour to the valiant freedom fighters and establish state political and administrative system on social justice.

The Jatiya Party declaration also explained its various programmes industrial agricultural foreign defence labour and education policies. The declaration also defined its policies relating to law and judicial system health women youth and sports.

[3 Jan 86 p 3]

[Text]

The following is the concluding part of a news item published in our yesterday's issue under headline 'Jatiya Party floated'

Eighteen members of the Jatiya Party's presidium were announced in the city yesterday morning.

They are : 1. Mr. Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, 2. Mr. Maudud Ahmed, 3. Mr. Kazi Zafar Ahmed, 4. Mr. Sirajul Hossain Khan, 5. Mr. Riazuddin Ahamed (Bhola Mia), 6. Mr. Salah Uddin Qader Chowdhury, 7. Barrister Sultan Ahmed Chowdhury, 8. M. Kurban Ali, 9. Mr. Sha T Moazzam Hussain, 10. Barrister Anisul Islam Mahmud, 11. Mr. Anwar Hussain Manju, 12. Mr. Humayun Rashid Chowdhury, 13. Mr. Moyeedul Islam, 14. AVM K.M. Aminul Islam (retd), 15. Capt A Halim Chowdhury (retd), 16. Mr. Shamsul Huda Chowdhury, 17. Mr. Abdus Sattar and 18. Justice Nurul Islam.

Three more members will be taken in the presidium.

Secretary General Prof M.A. Matin, Member Secretary of

the NEC : Mr. Anwar Zahid. Following are the members of the National Executive Committee of the party.

(1) Prof MA. Matin (2) Mr. Anwar Zahid (3) Mr. Shafiqul Gani Shapan (4) Lt Col Zafar Imam (retd) (5) Mr. Sunil Gupta (6) Mr. Mustafa Jamal Haider, (7) Mr. Moeen Uddin Bhuiyan, (8) Mr. Zia Uddin Babloo, (9) Mr. Mesbahuddin Bablu, (10) Mr. Sheikh Shahidul Islam, (11) Mrs. Momota Wahab, (12) Prof. Yusuf Ali, (13) Mr. Shamsul Haq (14) Col. Anwarullah (retd), (15) Mr. Upendra Lal Chakma (16) Mrs. Kamrun Nahar Zafar (17) Barrister Abdul Haque, (18) Mr. S.A. Khaleque, (19) Mr. Jahangir Muhammad Adel (20) Mr. Nazimuddin Ali Azad, (21) Mr. Mahbulul Haque Dulong, (22) Mr. Manirul Haque Chowdhury, (23) Mr. Tajul Islam Chowdhury, (24) Mr. Nur Muhammad Khan, (25) Mr. Ebanul Karim Shahid, (26) Prof. Abdus Salam, (27) Monsur Ali, (28) Mr. Ruhul Amin Howlader, (30) Mr. Polash Anwar Mati, (30) Advocate Foiz, (31) Mr. Sekander Main, (32) Mr. Shamsuzzaman Minto, (33) Mr. Khuram Khan Chowdhury, (34)

Mr. Hashim Uddin Ahmed, (35) Mr. S.B. Zaman, (36) Mr. Ashraf Ali Khan, (37) Mr. Mahmud Choudhury, (38) Mr. Nurun Nabi Chan, (39) Mr. Abul Khair Choudhury, (40) Mr. Redwanul Haq Choudhury, (41) Mr. Ismail Hussain Bengal, (42) Mr. Kazi Mujibur Rahman, (43) Barrister Jamal Hussain Bhuiyan, (44) Advocate Riazul Haque Choudhury, (45) Mr. Abdur Rahim Azad, (46) Mr. Bulbul Khan Mahbub, (47) Mr. Harun Ar Rashid, (48) Mr. Khaledur Rahman Titu, (49) Mr. Asgar Ali, (50) Mr. Ekramur Rasul, (51) Mr. F.G. Karim, (52) Mr. Ali Nur Rahman Khan Shajo, (53) Mr. Adil Uddin Howlader, (54) Mr. Sarder Sultan Mahmud, (55) Mr. Abdul Alim Bulbul, (56) Advocate Mohd. Mohsin and (56) Saifuddin Ahmed. BSS adds : Appointments of three Joint Secretary Generals of the Jatiya Party were announced last night party Secretary General Prof M.A. Matin said. The Joint Secretary Generals are: Mr. Shafiqul Ghani Swapan, Mr. Mostafa Zamal Haider and Lt. Col. (retd) Zafar Imam.

Additional Presidium Member

Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 9 Jan 86 p 8

[Text]

Professor Yusuf Ali and Begum Mumata Wahab have been made members of the Presidium of Jatiya Party.

According to a party press release signed by party's Member Secretary Anwar Zahid with the inclusion of these two persons total number of the presidium member stands to 20.

Foreign Policy Explained

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH TIMES in English 2 Jan 86 pp 1, 12

[Text]

Foreign policy of the newly formed Jatiya Party would be friendship to all and malice towards none that it would aim at achieving sovereign equality

and peaceful coexistence with all, states the declaration of the party released on Wednesday, reports BSS.

It also said its adherence to the nonaligned movement and to the declaration of the OIC and to the U.N. Charter while remaining steadfast to the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of others.

The declaration said the party would instill the spirit of cooperation and awareness generated by the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) to further the wel-

fare of the people in the region, as well as of mankind.

The foreign policy declaration of the Jatiya Party further said that the party would endeavour to develop and foster friendly relations with China, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Burma, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Maldives on the basis of sovereignty.

The Jatiya Party declared that it would pursue a policy to ensure the rightful share of the flow of waters of the Ganges, Brahmaputra and other rivers, to establish the sovereign rights

of Bangladesh on South Talpatti Island, Dahagram, Angarpota enclaves and Tinbigha corridor and to find out an honourable solution to the existing problems with India, such as, one posed by the proposed erection of the barbed fencing and the observation towers.

Friendship with Muslim world including the Arab countries will be another objective of the party while it would try to usher in unity among the Muslim ummah under the guidance of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC).

National Committee Members

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 6, 7 Jan 86

[6 Jan 86 pp 1, 8]

The Jatiya Party has announced the names of 198 persons of the 601-member National Committee according to a party press release issued in Dhaka on Sunday reports BSS.

The Press release signed by Member-Secretary of the party and State Minister for Information Mr Anwar Zahid said that the names of other members would be announced in four to five instalments.

Following are the members: Mr Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury Mr Shamsul Huda Chowdhury Mr Kurban Ali Mr Riazuddin Ahmed (Bhola Mia) Capt (Retd) Abdul Halim Chowdhury Prof. Yusuf Ali Bhah Moezzem Hossain Mr Sunil Gupta Air Vice-Marshal (Retd) K. M. Aminul Islam Prof. M. A. Matin Md Shamsul Haq Air Vice-Marshal (Retd) A. G. Mahmood Mr M. A. Saiter Mr Ali Amjad Khan Mr Hashim Uddin Ahmed Mr Redwanul Haq Chowdhury (Idu Chowdhury) Barrister Abdul Haq Dr Amina Rahman M Mansur Ali Mr Shauvikul Chhant Swapan Mr Abu Naser Khan Bhattacharya Col. (Retd) M Anwarul Haq

Azizul Haq (Nannan Mia) Mr Upendra Lal Chakma Mrs Quamrunnihar Zalar Mrs Nur Jahan Kamal Mr K. A. Majibur Rahman Mr Md Shahidullah Mr Md. Mohsin Prof. Abdus Salam Mr Mainuddin Bhuiyan Mr Abdus Sobhan Sheikh Abdur Rahman A. Bari Waris Barrister Mahbubul Kabir Choudhury Capt (Retd) Nawab Hossain Miah Shahid Hossain Mr Noor Mohommad Khan Maj. Gen. (Retd) Abdyl Matin Col. (Retd) Abdul Malek Mr Mohammad Habibullah Mrs Hasina Banu Shirin Mr Abdul Matin Chowdhury Mr Mahbubul Haque Dolan Mr Majibur Rahman Mr S. A. Khalek Mr. Ralab Ali Fakir Mr T. M. Ghossein Mr Ahmed Fazlur Rahman Mr Azizur Rahman Gora Mr. Harun-ar-Rashid Mollah Mr Jahangir Alam Mr S. B. Zaman Mr Hashem Ali Mr Nazimuddin Al-Azad Mr Rohul Amin Hawladar Mr Monirul Haque Chowdhury Mr Shamsuzzaman Mintu.

[Text]

Following is the remaining part of the 198-man list of the National Committee members of the Jitva Party:

Mr Nurul Islam Milon Mr Siddiqur Rahman Mr Reazur Rahman Khan Advocate Mohammad Ali Khandoker Manzoore-Mowla Mr Gour Chandra Bala Mr Polash Anwar Moti Mr Shahidullah C. A. Mr Mohibul Islam Curzon Mr Runa Dewanice Mr Monirul Haq Bhuiyan Mr Moyenuddin Sarkar Mr Golam Mortaza Mr A. Baten Chowdhury Mr Golam Sarwar Mr M. A. Matin Khandaker Seraiul Islam Prof M. Ishaque Mr Anami Prasad Roy Chowdhury Mr Manzurul Haq Sikdar Advocate A. Razaque Advocate Abu Abdullah Advocate Sohrab Hossain Mr Sudhir Kumar Hazra Syed Ahmed Farooq Mr Afazuddin Khan Advocate Mansurur Rahman Mr Emran Chowdhury Advocate Abdullah Farooq Mr Ziauddin Bablu Mrs Amena Bari Mr Akbar Azad Kayes Syeda Fatema Shoista Banu Mr Abdullah Al Nasser Mr Asadul Haq Syed Masud Reza Barrister Kazi Kamal Ahmed Advocate Seraiul Haq Farooq Barrister Abdur Rob Advocate Abdul Hamid Chowdhury Advocate M. A. Rashid Advocate Abdul Latif Mr Golam Sarwar Milon Mr Shahid Ahmed Khandaker Mr Abu Sayeed Khan Mr Zamir Chowdhury Mr A. Hye Lachchu Mr Rubul Amin Bhuiyan Mr Misir Ahmed Bhuiyan Mr Saidur Rahman Manik Mr Habibullah Bahar Engineer Abul Kashem Advocate Jinnat Ali Mrs Anwara Begum Prof Nurjahan Begum Mrs Khaleda Habib Mrs Anwara Zaman Anu Mrs Nuresh Maksud Mrs Enayet Nur Mrs Sobita Mahmud Begum Farida Banu Mr Anwar Hossain Khan Chowdhury Dr Nazimuddin Ahmed Dr Shamsuddin Principal Ahad Chowdhury Engineer Faruk Alam Mrs Jolly Rahman Dr Farid Barrister M. I. Chowdhury Mr Mahmud Hasan Advocate Anwarul Huq Anu Mr A. Razzak Chowdhury Advocate Sharfuddin Khan Mukul Alhaj

M. A. Raquib Mr M. A. Reza Mr Mohiuddin Hyder Khoka Advocate Jahanara Begum Advocate Nurul Huq Mr Shahidur Rahman Lal Advocate Abdul Ali Mr Mohibul Alam Mr Md Harun Advocate Helal Uddin Mr Mostafa Kamal Mr Mahabbat Hossain Siddiky Mr Md Mohsin Hossain Alhaj Abdur Rahman Mr M. A. Awal Mr Altaf Hossain Mr Jahangir Maimnader Mr Afser Kamal Chowdhury Prof Taufika Karim Advocate Ulfat Ara Mr Humayun Kabir Mr Mafizur Rahman Principal Delwar Hossain Mr Fazlul Haque Fazu Mr Faizul Kabir Mrs Shamsi Rahman Begum Amatun Nur Parina Mr Nazir Ahmed Prof A. Rauf Khan Mr Sultan Ahmed Mr Mizan Uddin Khan Mr Matiur Rahman Mr Hafez Nuruzzaman Haji Salah Uddin Mr Enamul Haque Jaz Mia.

BANGLADESH

SHEIKH HASINA ADDRESSES 15-PARTY ALLIANCE RALLY

Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 2 Jan 86 pp 1, 8

[Text]

The 15-Party Alliance leader and Awami League Chief Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon all sections of people to build up an intensive movement and carry it ahead unitedly to put an end to martial law and establish a representative government.

She was addressing a rally of the alliance in front of the Stadium Gate. Prior to her address, a declaration containing the action programme of the alliance was read out at the rally by Dilip Barua.

The rally was followed by a procession which ended at the Central Shaheed Minar after parading the main thoroughfares of the old city. The alliance leaders who participated in the procession included Abdul Malek Ukil, Mohiuddin Ahmed, Nirmal Sen, Mohammad Farhad, Rashed Khan Menon, A.F.M. Mahbubul Huq, Nasim Ali, Suranjeet Sen Gupta, Abdur Razzak, Tofail Ahmed, Mohammad Nasim, Mujahidul Islam Selim, Haider Akbar Khan Rano and Moyeen Sarker.

Sheikh Hasina who was the lone speaker at the rally said our new year's vow is to free the country from the clutches of the authoritarian military rulers and vest the power in the hands of the people.

She said that the people of the country had been groaning under martial law in various forms for the last ten years. The military rulers formed political parties and fronts to legitimise their illegally-grabbed power and actions taken

under martial law, she added.

Referring to the formation of a new political party, she said that the results of election had been determined before its birth earmarking 200 seats of parliament for its candidates and the remaining 100 seats for the opposition parties.

The alliance leader said that the government and the opposition had different purposes of elections. The government wanted to legitimise its forcibly-grabbed power and its actions taken under martial law while the opposition was carrying on a movement for a representative government, she added.

She stressed the need for a movement saying that free and fair elections could not be held under this government.

She said that the government had held a referendum banning all political activities from March 1 and detaining the political leaders and the people had not participated in it.

Sheikh Hasina said that while the turnout of voters was only three to four per cent, the government-controlled TV and Radio had propagated it to be 74 per cent. This was an instance of their election, she said.

She said we had carried on limited activities against the authoritarian military rulers in spite of the ban on politics. Their movement was not designed against the army but the military rule, she added.

She alleged that a handful

of army officials were using the armed forces in their personal interests.

Sheikh Hasina held the people in power responsible for corruption in all spheres of administration.

Expressing her solidarity with the movements of the professionals and the jute mills workers, she said that the/ had been compelled to resort to movement to realise their demands.

She said that in spite of accepting their legitimate demands the government had unleashed repression on them and already dismissed nine leaders of the striking professionals. The apathetic attitude of the government towards the demands of the professionals had caused immense inconvenience to the public and hindered treatment of patients in the hospitals.

She urged the government to meet legitimate demands of the professionals and jute mill workers.

Sheikh Hasina said that more elections might be given in the days to come, but the movement would continue until realisation of the five-point demand.

Referring to the recovery of weapons from a Dhaka University hall she warned the government against any attempt to supply arms to "Naton Bangla wala."

Condemning the attack on the office of the Vice Chancellor of Dhaka university she said we want peace on the campus.

/9274

CSO: 4600/1311

BANGLADESH

PAPER REPORTS RALLY OF SEVEN-PARTY ALLIANCE

Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 2 Jan 86 pp 1, 8

[Text]

The Seven-Party Alliance has announced a programme of half-day action programme from 6 a.m. to 12 noon in Dhaka city on January 5 to press for realisation of the five-point demands.

Making this announcement at a rally at Gulistan yesterday, the alliance called for holding meetings and rallies and bringing out processions all over the country from January 6 and said it would announce its next programme on January 13.

The rally also extended its support to the striking doctors, engineers, agriculturists and jute mills workers and demanded an immediate end to oppression, arrests, dismissal from jobs, corruption, smuggling and hooliganism.

The Seven-Party Alliance called upon all political parties and professionals groups and organisations irrespective of faith and identity to build up an united movement against military rule and establish a democratic government.

In a declaration that was read out at the end of the rally, the alliance said a democratic government elected through parliament polls after withdrawal of martial law was the crying need for saving the nation from destruction.

The declaration said the present government was making a move to legalise itself and to cling to power. So, it said, a greater national unity was an imperative for an united movement for foiling that move and replacement of this regime.

The rally which was follo-

wed by a procession participated by the leaders, workers and supporters of the component parties of the alliance was addressed among others by Begum Khaleda Zia, Mirza Golam Hafiz, Saifur Rahman, K.M. Obaidur Rahman, Barrister Abul Hasnat, Abdur Rouf Chowdhury, Mian Sadequr Rahman, Abdul Matin, Abdul Mannan, Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Tanvir Ahmed Siddiky, Abul Kasem and Reazuddin. Begum Raida Ranman of BNP presided.

Addressing the rally, Begum Khaleda Zia demanded immediate announcement of a firm date for election and said that a free and fair poll on the basis of five-point demands under a neutral and non-party government could save the country from the present crisis.

The BNP chief declared in a firm voice that the movement began anew from yesterday and it would go on untill the five-point demands were realised, a democratic government was formed and basic rights of the people were guaranteed in the country.

Begum Zia observed that though the ban on open politics had been withdrawn, the fundamental rights of the people, freedom of press and independence of judiciary were yet to be restored. 'Restrictions may be imposed on open politics again under certain plea but this time we are not going back,' she asserted.

She referred to the police raid on Mohsin Hall of Dhaka University and it as a conspiracy just on the eve of withdrawal of ban on open political activities.

'We do not do the politics of weapons,' she said adding that her party had rather been demanding of the authorities to keep different places absolutely free from arms. She also demanded immediate release of those who were arrested in connection with the Mohsin Hall incident and withdrawal of false cases against them.

K.M. Obaidur Rahman said the movement would continue until the democracy was established in the country and the basic rights of the people were restored. He also criticised the formation of government-backed Jatiya Dal and said it would have no room on the soil of Bangladesh.

Barrister Abul Hasnat said the Mohsin Hall of Dhaka University came under attack in a planned way under a blueprint of which Bablu and Neeru became victims. He said Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal was not for politics of weapons and added that it was being done by Nutun Bangla Chhatra Samaj.

Abdur Rouf Chowdhury said, we want to establish a democratic rule in this country. He also called upon the people to come forward unitedly to fight autocracy and achieve the goal.

Abdul Matin said the people would no longer tolerate any dictatorial rule in this country and demanded immediate poll for a sovereign parliament under a non-party government. He said, there might be differences of opinion among us but we all are united on the question of five-point.

/9274

CSO: 4600/1311

BANGLADESH

FOREIGN MINISTER ADDRESSES ISLAMIC CONFERENCE MEET

Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 9 Jan 86 pp 1, 8

[Text]

Foreign Minister Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury has made a strong plea for strengthening the 45-member Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) to make it more effective in tackling problems facing the Islamic world, reports BSS.

In his statement at the 16th Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers "in Fez on Tuesday Mr Chowdhury said," the members of the organization can contribute significantly to the search for international harmony, security and development if we, the Islamic ummah, are counted as a single and united world force.

According to his statement released to press by the Foreign Office here yesterday, the Foreign Minister said, 'now is the time' for the Islamic world to devote to 'tackle our future with relentless energy.'

The Foreign Minister also made a strong plea for removal of the factors affecting the unity and solidarity of the Islamic world, safeguarding and promoting the economic security of the OIC countries, and to face and solve the Middle East problems demonstrating the enduring force and vitality of the Islamic ummah.

The Foreign Minister proposed a seven-point programme to safeguard and promote economic security of Islamic countries which included a special action programme for the Islamic LDCs hard hit by the recession, investing in the food and agriculture sectors in member countries on priority, special action plan for

natural disaster hit people in OIC countries, acceleration of the arrangements of the SNPA for the LDCs and full implementation of the UNCTAD trade and development board resolutions—165 (S-ix), rolling back of protectionism, removal of trade barriers and strengthening the world trading system through the UN, GATT and other international fora, convening of an international conference on monetary and financial issues to consider appropriate reforms aimed at providing greater stability and momentum for development.

Mr Chowdhury said that

the political perversities of Zionism and apartheid cannot be allowed to continue.

Foreign Minister Chowdhury reiterated the urgent need for convening the international conference on the Middle East for attaining a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region with the participation of all parties including the PLO.

The Foreign Minister reiterated support to the valiant peoples of South Africa and Namibia fighting for their independence, fundamental human rights, civil and political liberties and right to self determination.

"We reaffirm" Mr. Chowdhury said, "that an application of complete mandatory economic sanctions will mark a watershed in the struggle against apartheid and hasten the process towards the emergence of a non racial and representative government in South Africa."

He said that the solution to the Afghan and Kampuchean problems depended on withdrawal of foreign troops, return of Afghan refugees to Afghanistan and on restoration of the rights of the Afghans and Kampuchians to choose freely their own form of democratic government without any outside interference.

BANGLADESH

BRIEFS

NEW FRENCH AMBASSADOR--The Ambassador designate of France to Bangladesh, Mr Stanislas Filliol presented his credentials to President Hussain Muhammad Ershad at Bangabhaban in Dhaka yesterday morning reports BSS. Presenting his letter of credence the new Ambassador expressed the hope that during his tenure of office the already existing friendly ties and cooperation between Bangladesh and France will be further strengthened to the mutual benefit of the two peoples. Reciprocating the sentiments President Ershad assured Mr Filliol of all possible assistance and cooperation in the smooth discharge of his duties. Earlier, on his arrival, the new envoy was given a guard of honour by president's guard regiment at the lush green lawn of Bangabhaban. He took, salute and inspected the guard. [Text] [Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 9 Jan 86 p 3] /9274

AMBASSADOR TO PHILIPPINES--Ambassador designate of the Philippines to Bangladesh Mr Eynaldo O Arcilla presented his credentials to President Hussain Muhammad Ershad at Bangabhaban yesterday morning, reports BSS. Presenting his letter of credence, the new Ambassador expressed the hope that during his tenure of office the already existing friendly ties and cooperation between Bangladesh and the Philippines will be further strengthened to the mutual benefit of the two peoples. Reciprocating the sentiment, President Ershad assured Mr Arcilla of all possible assistance and cooperation in the smooth discharge of his duties. Earlier, on his arrival, the new envoy was given a guard of honour by President's Guard Regiment at the lush green lawn of Bangabhaban. He took salute and inspected the guard. [Text] [Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 8 Jan 86 p 3] /9274

PRC NAVAL VISIT--Chittagong, Dec 30--Two Naval Ships of People's Liberation Army (Navy) of China left Chittagong this morning after a five-day goodwill visit to Bangladesh, says a press release. During their stay, the flag officer of the voyage Admiral Nie Kuiju, Commandar of the East China Sea fleet called on President and CMLA Lt General Hussain Muhammad Ershad and the Chief of Naval Staff and DCMLA Rear Admiral Sultan Ahmed. He also laid wreath at the Shikha Anirban at Dhaka Cantonment. The visiting Chinese Naval Officers and Sailors exchanged visits to ships and played friendly sports matches with the officer and sailors of Bangladesh Navy. [Text] [Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 31 Dec 85 p 8] /9274

ALGERIAN JUTE PURCHASE--Algeria will buy six thousand metric tons, equivalent to 33,300 bales of raw jute from Bangladesh worth Taka five crore 80 lakh 32

thousand, reports BSS. A Contract to this effect has recently been signed in Algiers between the Bangladesh Jute Corporation (BJC) and the Algerian Jute Purchasing Agency. As per the contract Algeria will buy this jute from the Bangladesh Jute Corporation and shipment will be made during January to March next, the handout said. [Text] [Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 27 Dec 85 p 8] /9274

AMBASSADOR TO VATICAN--Bangladesh envoy to the Holy See Ambassador AHS Ataul Karim presented his credentials to Pope John Paul II, on Saturday, a Foreign Office press release said in Dhaka on Thursday, reports BSS. The Pope and the Ambassador expressed the hope that the friendly relations between the Holy See and Bangladesh would be further strengthened in the years to come. [Text] [Dhaka THE BANGLADESH TIMES in English 4 Jan 86 p 3] /9274

SOVIET AID DISCUSSED--Mr V. G. Beliaev, Soviet Ambassador in Bangladesh called on Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Mr Anwar Hossain at the latter's office in Dhaka on Monday, reports BSS. They discussed bilateral issues and matters of mutual interest. During the discussion, the progress of USSR aided 210 meywatt third unit of Ghorashal thermal power station extension project came up in particular, a PID handout said. [Text] [Dhaka THE BANGLADESH TIMES in English 27 Dec 85 p 3] /9274

MUSLIM LEAGUE EXPULSIONS--Bangladesh Muslim League (Siddiqui) in a meeting on Sunday with Mr A. N. Yusuf in the chair expelled Mr. Salauddin Kader Chowdhury, Joint Secretary, Sarder Sultan Mahmud Vice President and Mr. Abdul Alim on charges of anti-party activities. The party in a Press release signed by party Secretary General Begum Razia Faiz said that the expelled members were involved in unconstitutional activities tarnishing the image of the party. The statement further termed the meeting held at DDSA on Saturday conducted by Mr. Abdul Alim as illegal. [Text] [Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 29 Dec 85 p 8] /9274

AMBASSADOR TO UN--The Presidential Adviser, Mr. Justice B. A. Siddiky, has resigned from the office of convener of the Bangladesh Muslim League (Siddiky group), according to a press release on Saturday reports BSS. Former Chief Justice of the then East Pakistan High Court, Mr. Justice Siddiky, in a statement of December 27 said he resigned "with immediate effect" from the convener-ship of the Muslim League. The Government announced in Dhaka on Wednesday last its decision to appoint Mr. Justice B. A. Siddiky Bangladesh's Permanent Representative to the United Nations. [Text] [Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 29 Dec 85 p 8] /9274

CSO: 4600/1312

IRAN

OPPOSITION PAPER REPORTS ON SECURITY, INFORMATION ACADEMY

GF121526 London KEYHAN in Persian 2 Jan 86 p 15

[Text] KEYHAN Political Service--The Information and Security Academy meant for training information officials, interrogators, and heads and officials of the Islamic Republic prisons in which political prisoners are kept, will open next Farvardin [21 March-20 April] and will impart training, in addition to the Iranian trainees, to train from Islamic and the Arab countries. According to reports received from the Arab sources in the Persian Gulf, a large number of young men from Persian Gulf Arab countries and Africa are being sent for training to Iran via Europe by the Islamic Republic embassies in those countries. They will receive training in the classes held in the security academy of the Islamic regime.

A team of Korean and Syrian security specialists, who are even now cooperating with the information organization of the regime along with groups of penitent mujahedin known by the name of "Tawabin" [those who have expressed their penitence], will impart necessary training to the trainees in the Information and Security Academy.

/9738

CSO: 4640/161

IRAN

FREE VOICE OF IRAN REPORTS ABDUCTION OF CLERGYMAN

GF090806 (Clandestine) Free Voice of Iran in Persian 1500 GMT 8 Jan 86

[Excerpt] The selection of Mr Montazeri to be the leader and Vali-e-Faqih after Khomeyni's demise has been deemed a major insult in practice to the grand sources of emulation and has been described as trampling upon their honor and station and the most dangerous blow to the sublime form of jurisprudence yet.

One questions the propriety and legitimacy of the selection. Consider the presence in Iraq [as heard] of his Eminence Ayatollah Khoy and other sources of emulation of similar stature, such as the Grand Ayatollahs Shari-atmadari, Golpayegani, Mar'ashi-Najafi and others in Qom, as well as Ayatollah Qomi in Khorasan and so many other senior ayatollahs who are sagacious and perceptive of national and current affairs in all Muslim countries, particularly Iran. Yet Mr Montazeri, a simple seminarian of the Qom theological seminary, has been introduced as the guardian and Vali of 40 million Iranians and 800 million Muslims around the world, as well as the guardian of the sources of emulation and the great Shi'ite 'ulema. This selection was based on the ambiguous and spurious principles of the Velayat-e Faqih, which are unheard of throughout 1,400 years of Islamic and Shi'ite jurisprudence and which have no precedence in any Islamic canonical literature, and has been documented in the unfounded constitution of the Islamic Republic, which is not even respected or followed by Mr Khomeyni or his cohorts and acolytes.

The person who issued this communique, Ayatollah Sadeq Rowhani, was abducted by the guards of the Velayat-e Faqih regime. No news or clue about the abducted ayatollah has been obtained.

/9738

CSO: 4640/157

IRAN

EMIGRE PAPER COMMENTS ON DISSOLUTION OF ARMY

GF121301 London KEYHAN in Persian 9 Jan 86 p 6

[Editorial: "Khomeyni's Intentions in Respect of the Army"]

[Text] Ayatollah Khomeyni suddenly, amidst war, took a bold, miscalculated, and amateurish step to dissolve the Army and instructed the guards corps to establish their own army, navy, and air force.

He is now trying to make up for his big mistake. He is highly praising the Army and in one of his speeches he has stated that the Army is the 'strongest arm of the Islamic revolution'. He now thinks that these things are necessary to retract his earlier remarks.

However, Khomeyni's praise for the Army appeared highly exaggerated compared to his inner and deep hatred toward the traditional Armed Forces of Iran. In the speeches in which he praised the Army, he said: Mojahedin-e Khalq organization (or in his own words the "hypocrites") wanted dissolution of the Army from the very beginning.

It was only by chance that this time the ayatollah told the truth, not because he wanted to tell the truth, but to make his earlier lies more palatable to the soldiers. His biggest lie was that he himself was, from the very beginning, against dissolving the Army.

In actual fact the ayatollah is basically in favor of dissolving the Army, however, it was only the time factor on which he differed with the Mojahedin-e Khalq. The reason being that the Mojahedin, from the beginning of the revolution, had a noteworthy armed force at their disposal, but at the time the ayatollah did not have his own armed force, the guards corps, which he could trust and lay faith upon.

Circumstances and events, presumably including the war with Iraq, have forced him to shelve plans to dissolve the Army, but it has never been out of his mind. As soon as a suitable opportunity arises, his regime will not lose a moment in dissolving the Army. His primary aim is to limit the jurisdiction of the Army in various matters, transferring the martial

law courts to the cleric judicial system and shifting matters related to the martyrs to the martyr's foundation. It is toward this desired end that he may be able to dissolve the Army whenever he thinks fit, or he may merge the Army into the guards corps so that it ceases to exist.

Therefore, when the Army commanders were recently sent to pay their respects to Ayatollah Golpayegani [occasional critic of the Islamic regime], it served as a dual deception. The Army would appear to have the backing of the religious authorities while serving as an apparent shield against the widespread dissatisfaction found in the Qom seminaries.

/9738

CSO: 4640/162

IRAN

PAPER REPORTS ON HOUSE ARREST OF RELIGIOUS LEADER

GF201651 London KEYHAN in Persian 16 Jan 86 p 2

[Text] The Qom Mohammadiyah Mosque has recently witnessed open counterrevolution movements. This time the victim was Ayatollah Seyyed Sadeq Ruhani, the most distinguished scholar of the Qom Theological Seminary.

In those days [upon his return to Iran in 1979] Khomeyni was living at the refah school in Tehran and had witnessed the first executions. When he made his way to Qom, the Grand Ayatollahs Shari'atmadari, Mar'ashi-Najafi, Gilpayegani, and Seyyed Sadeq Ruhani went outside of the city to receive him. The next day Khomeyni paid a return visit to Shari-atmadari, Mar'ashi-Najafi, and Golpayegani, but he postponed the return visit to Seyyed Sadeq Ruhani by a day. The next day, when Seyyed Sadeq Ruhani was informed that Khomeyni was to call on him, he replied that it was too late and thus he abstained from receiving the leader of the Islamic revolution.

Ayatollah Ruhani had been teaching for years at the Qom Theological Seminary. If ever he indulged in political activity or political expressions, he did so openly. It was somehow heard that Seyyed Sadeq Ruhani had been speaking against the Velayat-e Faqih and in doing was quoting noteworthy arguments. He had been speaking about these things privately and in private and special circles. He never spoke about such things while delivering his sermons or when he conducted his classes.

After several years' silence, the first open expression of his views came concerning the election of Ayatollah Hoseyn 'Ali Montazeri as successor to Ayatollah Khomeyni. During one of his speeches in the Qom Mohammadiyah Mosque, without expressing any objection to Ayatollah Montazeri as a person, he said: The mode of election was incorrect and "the election of a leader in the Shi'ite system is different from what some so-called experts have conducted, which relies on the views of a handful of lackeys." He added: "This is the equivalent of destroying Islam and amounts to ringing the knell of the Shi'ite system." Simultaneously with this, a statement was issued in Tehran, Qom, and Mashhad by an organization called the "United National Front," which supports Ruhani's views.

Seyyed Sadeq Ruhani subsequently repeated his views in his classes in a very clear way. This made Khomeyni unhappy. Although Khomeyni himself did not

say anything, Ayatollah 'Ali Meshkini, the Friday imam of Qom and the chairman of the same council of experts against whom Ayatollah Sadeq Ruhani had said those things, expressed his displeasure during his address to the students of the Qom seminary and said: Imam feels concerned and since this statement is counterrevolutionary, it may adversely affect the seminary. Then in an insulting manner he added: "Microbes are attacking the revolution."

If you compare this incident with what happened to Sahri'atmadari, no one would be surprised at the insult delivered to Sadeq Ruh Ani. After Meshkini's insults, they took Seyyed Sadeq Ruhani to the Qom headquarters of the Guards Corps where he was interrogated in an insulting manner. The interrogation was carried on for hours, but Sadeq Ruhani never fell short of what he had said.

They wanted him to sign an understanding that in the future he would not indulge in politics, but he refused to be part of any such understanding. He was sent back to his residence. His classes were closed and the telephone connection to his house was cut.

Thus after Seyyed Kazem Shari'atmadari, now another well-known jurisconsult has been placed under house arrest.

/9599

CSO: 4640/170

IRAN

AIRLINE SUFFERS FROM SHORTAGE OF AIRCRAFT

GF201345 London KEYHAN in Persian 16 Jan 86 p 3

[Text] National Iran Airways is suffering from a shortage of aircraft, which has affected the transporting of passengers. The cancellation of several flights to Europe and the Far East from the weekly Iranair schedule is thought due to a lack of airworthy aircraft. Most of the Iranair aircraft purchased during the previous regime are now being used for domestic flights only. Iranair authorities have, therefore, signed an agreement with Lufthansa to fly three flights per week from Europe to Bandar 'Abbas, effective 1 January 1986. These passengers will be carried by Iranair from Bandar 'Abbas to other cities in Iran.

At present, two Iranian aircraft are being held in Iraq. During domestic flights the aircraft were hijacked last year by Iranian dissidents and flown to Baghdad. The Iraqi regime freed the passengers and gave political asylum to the hijackers. It then announced that as long as the war continued the aircraft would remain in Baghdad.

An Iranian delegation led by the Iranian civil aviation officials left for Montreal last week to lodge a complaint with IATA [International Air Transport Association]. After looking into the Iranian complaint the organization passed two resolutions and said that both the Iraqi and the Iranian regimes should ensure the safety of airline passengers and also asked Iraq to return the two hijacked planes to Iran.

/9599

CSO: 4640/170

IRAN

KHO'INIHA POINTS OUT RESURGENCE OF COUNTERREVOLUTIONARIES

GF261532 London KEYHAN in Persian 23 Jan 86 p 1

[Text] Tehran--Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohammad Musavi Kho'iniha [the prosecutor general] in his address to a group of clergy, Shar' magistrates, sheykhs and khans of Sistan va Baluchestan, attacked them and said: "This group is resurging gradually and is raising its voice in Sistan va Baluchestan and Khuzestan. These people are also colluding with the capitalists and khans who have returned from abroad. They have resumed their activities. After all this, people come to us and say: Hezbollahis should not interfere with them because it creates anarchy; the guards and the revolution committees should not intervene; you should have nothing to do with the landlords; let the returnees invest their capital." Kho'iniha added: "If we are not careful, unpleasant things would happen. These people interfere in the elections and, in short, in everything and they want to become the rulers again." Kho'iniha added: "The counterrevolutionaries have revived and are influencing everything and interfering in everything. In these circumstances you people should not come to us and say: 'Let the country prosper with their investments.' Today the Tudeh element cause no danger to us; the minigroups and hypocrites have no danger for us. It is the khans and the capitalists who have returned from the United States who are a threat to us. If we do not act against them today, tomorrow it will be too late."

/9599

CSO: 4640/169

IRAN

BRIEFS

USSR ENVOY SUPPORTS LIBYA--Boldyrev, the Soviet ambassador in Tehran, during a meeting with Besharati our country's deputy foreign minister, yesterday afternoon, while condemning America's recent threats against Libya, declared his country's support for Libya. Then, while describing the stance of the Islamic Republic of Iran towards America's terrorist threats against Libya, Besharati stressed Iran's all-round support for revolutionary Libya. He called America's anger a result of imperialist fear of the formation of the strategic axis by revolutionary countries in the region, in which Libya plays a serious role. [Text] [Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 14 Jan 86 LD] /9738

DISSOLUTION OF ARMED FORCES--The plot hatched by the Revolution Guards Corps under the aegis of Hoseyn 'Ali Montazeri for the complete dissolution of the armed forces has made some progress lately. According to a report from Tehran, Mohsen Reza'i [revolution guards corps commander] has presented three plans in this connection to Montazeri and discussion continues on each of the plans which aim at disbanding the armed forces and merging it with the guards corps. Mohsen Reza'i, who has taken refuge under Montazeri's wing from the onslaught of opposition from the mullahs' faction, continues to use Montazeri's influence in order to usurp more power for himself. The process of the allocation of the armed forces' logistical budget to the guards' corps and the transfer of some personnel was initiated 4 months ago. [Excerpt] [(Clandestine) Voice of the Liberation of Iran in Persian 1630 GMT 16 Jan 86] /9599

CLERGYMEN TO VISIT USSR--A delegation from the regime of mullahs has been invited to visit the Muslim republics of the Soviet Union. According to a report by our correspondent in [name indistinct], Mullah Jalal Taheri, Musavi-Kho'iniha, Mullah Do'a'i, and a number of mini-mullahs from various ministries as well as three Friday imams from various cities have received an invitation from the Soviet Embassy to visit the USSR. They are awaiting Khomeyni's permission in order to accept the invitation. Those invited are, first of all, members of extremist leftist factions and then mullahs. Do'a'i, who is in charge of ETTELA'AT newspaper, was a member of the Tudeh Party's youth organization before taking up the trade of being a clergy and was in the prison of the second department of the armed forces joint staff. General Qaravi, in his memoirs written before he was assassinated by the Tudeh'is, notes his personal arrest of Do'a'i in a Tehran street for distribution of Tudeh Party pamphlets. The majority of those invited to the USSR have previously spent some time in Libya. [Text] [(Clandestine) Voice of the Liberation of Iran in Persian 1630 GMT 18 Jan 86] /9599

ABU NIDAL IN TEHRAN--Damascus--Ahmad Jibril, secretary general of the PFLP general command, who opposes 'Arafat and is an agent of the Syrian regime, in an interview with an Italian paper (COURTIER D'LASARA) has said that Sabri al-Banna, alias Abu Nidal, leader of the extremist terrorists, who turned the airports of Rome and Vienna into a bloodbath, lives most of the time in Tehran. Jibril rejected Western reports which link Abu Nidal with the Syrian and Libyan regimes and said: The fact is that Abu Nidal is neither in Damascus nor Tripoli, but most of the time he is in Tehran. Ahmad Jibril's statement linking Abu Nidal with the Islamic Republic has not been issued without the consent of Damascus. In fact, Syria, in order to involve the Islamic Republic in this matter, has announced that it has no connection with Abu Nidal and his group the "revolutionary al-Fatah." [Text] [London KEYHAN in Persian 23 Jan 86 p 1] /9599

FORMATION OF NEW DEPARTMENT--One of the Voice of Liberation of Iran correspondents has reported from Tehran that recently a new department has been established within the Foreign Ministry of the clerics, called the "Department of Liberation Movements." This department has been placed under the son of cleric (Resyshahri). It has been given the disguise of "Department of Liberation Movements" and is overtly charged with providing financial help to liberation movements and providing expert personnel to such movements. However, this department has in fact been established to help terrorists and destructionists who are sent by the regime to points all over the world. In the matters of war this department will provide false passports and funds to persons sent on missions of terrorism and destruction. In fact, this kind of work is the real province of this new department established in the Iranian Foreign Ministry. [Text] [(Clandestine) Voice of Liberation of Iran in Persian 1630 GMT 24 Jan 86] /9599

GRENADE TOSSED AT HASHEMI-RAFSANJANI--The Voice of the Liberation of Iran correspondent in Tehran in a telephone report last night said that a grenade was thrown at the car carrying Hashemi-Rafsanjani at 0600 on Tuesday morning as his car passed along Saltanatabad Street. Hashemi-Rafsanjani's car, as well as a Toyota car carrying his bodyguard, were damaged. Two revolution guards were killed. Further details about the incident are not available but it is being said that the grenade was thrown from a considerable distance with military precision. [Text] [(Clandestine) Voice of the Liberation of Iran in Persian 1630 GMT 29 Jan 86] /9599

FOREIGN RESERVES DRAIN--The reduction in oil prices, the consecutive bombing of Khark and now, Geneveh, and the crisis of dwindling foreign reserves in the country have foiled all the schemes of the regime. 'Ali Khamene'i, who has returned to Tehran from a tour of Afro-Asian countries, convened a meeting of regime officials in his own office and explained this state of affairs in detail. 'Ali Khamene'i, who was trembling with rage, addressed those present at this meeting, saying that the superpowers wish to inflict the same crisis on us that they brought upon Dr Mosaddeq. It may be recalled that the Islamic regime's budget for the current fiscal year had stipulated the potential sale of 1.6 million barrels per day at a cost of \$29 per barrel, but following recent developments the latest figures of extraction of oil have fallen to 600,000 barrels per day and is being sold at the rate of \$17 per barrel. [Text] [(Clandestine) Voice of the Liberation of Iran in Persian 1630 GMT 25 Jan 86] /9599

RADIO JAMMING EQUIPMENT PURCHASE--The Islamic Republic regime has spent \$2 million to purchase radio jammers. The machinery, purchased from Eastern Europe, has high-power output and is used to jam news broadcasts of foreign radios. The Islamic Republic is using this equipment at different times to jam newscasts of Radio Iran, the Free Voice of Iran, the Voice of America, and Radio Israel, also sometimes Moscow. But foregin radios often change their frequencies to make them heard by the Iranian people. [London KEYHAN in Persian in its 23 January issue on page 3 carries an article which adds the BBC to the list of broadcasts jammed.] [Text] [(Clandestine) Radio Iran in Persian 1330 GMT 26 Jan 86] /9599

CSO: 4640/171

IRAQ

INTERVIEW WITH AIR FORCE COMMANDER

London AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 16 Dec 85 pp 14-15

[Interview with Lt General Hamid Sha'ban, commander of the Iraqi Air Force, by Walid al-Zubaydi: "Gulf States' Air Power Can Withstand Any Foreign Attack"; date and place not given]

[Text] This important interview conducted by AL-DUSTUR with Air Force Lt General Hamid Sha'ban, commander of the Iraqi Air Force, took place last week just hours before Iraqi fighter planes carried out a total of 144 combat missions in a single day against concentrations of Iranian forces. Naturally, the Iraqi Air Force has been playing a major and distinguished role in the battles between Iraq and Iran since the beginning of the war. Recently, it has come to the fore by proving its combat effectiveness against numerous far-flung targets, starting with Kharg Island, then against military targets, and finally against Tehran and other Iranian cities.

[Question] AL-DUSTUR began its interview with the commander of the Iraqi Air Force by asking his evaluation of the strike that the Iraqi Air Force had aimed at the Iranian Navard iron and steel plant.

[Answer] The Navard iron and steel plant was destroyed in two raids, with the aim of eliminating any hope for its use in the future or any attempt to repair it. Since the dimensions of the plant were large and its area extensive, it was necessary to use a large number of planes to hit it and destroy it. Thus, on 6 November, we directed a powerful and effective blow at it, one which destroyed large parts of it. On the basis of our observation of its remaining parts, buildings and other vital junctures, we directed the second crushing blow on the 14th of the same month. This blow completely destroyed the plant, which the Iranian enemy might in the future have used against Iraq or other countries by employing it for war industries. The strike was carried out in accordance with our procedure of destroying Iran's war machine and economy. Furthermore, the large force that destroyed the plant indicates the superb ability of the Iraqi Air Force to reach and destroy all important targets in Iran in order to produce the desired impact. The [Iraqi] command intends to destroy completely any Iranian economic establishment or military factory, and any vital target.

As for this plant, Navard, the shah spent a great deal on it, and many foreign companies participated with the goal of making it the best of its kind in this region, in keeping with the shah's expansionist goals. When the Khomeyni regime came along, it continued building the plant in order to take advantage of it in carrying out its aggressive and expansionist plans and objectives. Information available to us indicated that it was a huge plant, one that would take many years to build and that would produce iron and steel to supply many heavy industries, weapons, and other military equipment and spare parts.

[Question] Was it destroyed because it had begun production, or was it because it fell within the category of objectives that the Iraqi Air Force has set out to destroy?

[Answer] The strike against the plant and its destruction took place when its construction was at its climax; however, actual production had not yet begun seriously. That is what we intended by the timing. In addition, the plant falls into the category of vital objectives which we have set out to destroy and which play a part in feeding the war machine. Certainly, and as can be seen in the photographs we have, we believe that this plant is as good as finished. Any attempt to repair or restore it will require years, as well as other capabilities and requirements that we do not think the Iranians have at the present time, or will have, even in the future. This will be our aim for every target we deal with in the future.

[Question] Could we know something about the nature of the targets that you are considering hitting and destroying?

[Answer] The [Iraqi] command has advance knowledge of the details of all Iranian economic installations and factories and of the nature of their production from which the Iranian forces might derive benefit in the future. The supreme command, headed by Commander Saddam Husayn, has in the past warned these "madmen" that their economic and scientific establishment will be destroyed, if they insist on continuing the aggression against Iraq, and that they will in the future lose all their remaining industries and economic installations. The nature of all these objectives lies within a carefully studied timetable, and they will be dealt with according to the directives of the command.

[Question] There is an anticipated Iranian attack--Iran recently announced it. What is your evaluation of the expected attack? How do you comment on statements by the Iranians about the attack?

[Answer] The Iranians are always announcing that their attack will decide the battle, that it will be the last one, that...that...--in the same tone and with the same futile theory, the theory of the mullahs. But the peoples of Iran have begun to lose hope. The glittering promises are losing their credibility, especially after the destruction that took place in the previous attempts, attempts which led to real catastrophes lived through by the people of Iran. In this area, let us not forget the speeches that President and Commander Saddam Husayn addressed to the Iranian peoples before these

unsuccessful attacks and his candid warning to them to stop those impostors [the Iranian leaders] from driving wretched throngs of people into what would be--and indeed turned out to be--the mill of total destruction. The world knows what the losses were and what happened because of those futile battles and attacks. As for proud Iraq's preparations for the future, we can say that they are many times greater than all past preparations. We are completely ready to destroy any attack or attempt to meddle with any inch of the Iraqi borders. It will not just be destruction and crushing of the attacking units. It will go beyond that. The destruction will be total and complete. No one will have the right to blame us, for we have been warning again and again of the consequences of this tragedy for the Iranian peoples who await their inevitable doom at the hands of Iraq's forces and weapons in readiness to turn back the attack. And it will definitely be bigger and greater and more violent than all the previous battles. No one should doubt that we are keeping a very careful eye on every attempt and every activity of the enemy in preparation to carry out his futile threats. All we say is that the consequence of every threat is tragedy befalling the Iranian peoples. The rulers of Iran should learn from their experiences last time, since it was a bitter draught for them. The next battle will be grimmer and have a greater impact on them. They know Iraq's capabilities well, and they know how black their future will be if they try to meddle with Iraqi soil.

[Question] What about the Iranian Air Force? Can it influence the course of the war?

[Answer] The Iranian Air Force is nonexistent in weapons, influence, morale and leadership. An indication of this is the fact that it has not showed itself or had an influence; it does not even come out to fight in front of our planes. The other indication of its nonexistence is that our air raids gain mastery every day over various targets everywhere without being affected by the Iranian air defenses or air force. [The Iranian Air Force] is as good as finished now; and with Iran in such a state of decline and bad leadership, we cannot tell how many years rebuilding an air force will take.

[Question] How do you view the air strength of the Arab Gulf states?

[Answer] We believe that the fraternal states of the Arab Gulf possess the modern weapons and aircraft with which they can collectively confront any foreign aggression, especially in the face of a declining Iranian Air Force. We can also say that the rapid progress and interest on their part in aircraft and means of air defense herald a bright future, especially after the extent of air power's impact on the security and defense of areas facing enemies has become clear to everyone. In any case, our Iraqi Air Force is a part of the Arab air force and can carry out its role at any time it is asked to.

[Question] The role of the Iraqi Air Force in the war--how do you see it?

[Answer] I think the answer is clear to all friendly nations and others. It performs the role of a deterrent force, one whereby the enemy's hopes can be changed and his morale for continuing aggression destroyed. Also, it can carry on any role in the entire Arab region.

[Question] What about Kharg? How is Iran moving now in regard to the question of its oil exports?

[Answer] There is no doubt that Iran has become disturbed about oil income and has begun to turn in many directions to gather and deliver oil to the tankers in order to export a little of it. We have confirmed information in this area. Its fate will be complete destruction, for we will not stop with striking Kharg. As we have promised our political and military leadership and the world, we can reach all targets. The enemy's idea that some targets can be hidden from our eyes is mistaken. He cannot screen them from our planes or hide them from us.

[Question] Iranian officials are presenting high figures for oil exports. What is your comment on these figures?

[Answer] The pronouncements that say that Iran is able to export many million of barrels of oil a day are no more than pronouncements! In the days of the shah, when Iran's capacities were fully in order, with installations and all the requirements for export, it was not able to export a very small fraction of the figures Iranian officials are now announcing. The exact figures are available to specialists, and they are accurate figures. This exaggeration comes as a reaction to their failure to export an amount which would allow them to continue the war. Something else: the equipment capable of exporting millions [of barrels a day] has been completely destroyed. Repairing it or providing a substitute would take long years in peacetime. How, then, while they are in wartime, with our air force lying in wait for their targets and heaping blows on them? The lies of those men are clear to the world, and we want no more than that.

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CSO: 4404/179

PAKISTAN

REPORT TERMS SITUATION IN TRIBAL AREAS 'HIGHLY VOLATILE'

Lahore VIEWPOINT in English 9 Jan 86 pp 13, 14

[Text] Mr Abdul Latif Afridi, the NWFP President of the Pakistani National Party, is of the opinion that the tribal belt is the most sensitive area because most of the refugees from across the border are living there. The refugees have created political, economic and social problems at all levels in the NWFP but nowhere more acutely than in the tribal areas where the people live in perpetual fear of loss of life and property because of air raids and bombing by Afghan forces whose real target are the insurgents operating from this side of the Durand Line.

Talking to Viewpoint last week, the PNP leader, who belongs to the Afridi tribe against which army action was taken recently, said the situation in the NWFP in general and the tribal areas in particular, was highly volatile and if the refugee problem was not solved soon, it might explode. He said that the tribal belt of six agencies spread over 27,000 square kilometers was autonomous in character. The inhabitants had ethnic relations with Afghanistan. Many tribal families in fact lived on both sides of the border, movement across which had been free and unhindered for hundreds of years. This had made the tribal areas economically dependent on Afghanistan. Living standards in the tribal belt were the lowest in the country. There were only six industrial units in the region and four of them were lying idle. There were just 1,442 industrial workers in an area having a population of four million.

Stark Difference

Mr Afridi was of the view that since the Afghan Revolution the tribal people had been greatly influenced by the speedy economic development across the border. When they considered their own plight, they came to the inescapable conclusion that it was the Revolution which had improved living conditions immeasurably within a matter of six years. Tribesmen were still governed by the notorious Frontier Crimes Regulation which suppressed their fundamental rights.

Mr Afridi, who has a law practice in Peshawar, gave details of the military operation in the Khyber Agency--the second within a year. According to him, the Afghan refugees had robbed the tribal traders on a number of occasions. This was resented by some of the elders who had made repeated requests to the authorities to intervene but to no avail. Another cause for resentment was the continued refusal by the authorities not to withdraw the FCR and introduce universal adult franchise in the region.

December action

The authorities launched two offensives, the first in March and for the second time in December last year. The December operation lasted several days during which the Agency was so blockaded that the people were forced to starve. A hundred-kilogram bag of wheat flour went up to Rs 1,000. Vegetables disappeared and water supplies were suspended.

The official explanation for this massive operation was that the Government wanted to smash heroin dens and haul up other anti-social elements. Mr Afridi said that areas raided produced no poppy. Giving the story of a drug pedlar, Khan Zeb, Mr Afridi said he was hiding in the Khyber Agency and the people wanted him arrested so that he could be produced before the jirga. But the authorities, instead of proceeding against Khan Zeb, demolished the houses of those who wanted action taken against him.

Afghan arms

About the official claim that huge quantities of arms were given to the tribal elders while they were in Afghanistan, he said that it was a traditional gift from their hosts. "This has been the practice for centuries. The arms were not meant to be used against Pakistan," Mr Afridi said. He said the tribesmen were afraid of the activities of the Afghan refugees and they had been obliged to keep arms to defend themselves, but they did not fire a single bullet from the firearms gifted to them by Afghan elders," Mr Afridi concluded.

/9317

CSO: 4600/192

PAKISTAN

COMMENTARY VIEWS 'OFFICIAL MUSLIM LEAGUE'

Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 24 Jan 86 p 4

[Article by Prof Khaled Mehmdud]

[Text]

The christening of the OPG as Muslim League is the re-enactment of a historical scenario. It is another manifestation of the authoritarian disposition and feudal traditions of the ruling elites, which in the past have determined their attitude towards politics. They have a peculiar perception of the role of a political party which does not induce them to undertake the arduous task of building it from the grass roots. Lack of either political conviction or faith in the masses impels them to take over readymade contrivances which may be good enough to enable them to stay in power. The manner of launching the official Muslim League is reminiscent of the past attempts to create a facade of party system for legitimising the rule of those who happen to be in power.

Prime Minister Junejo may like to take credit for having succeeded against heavy odds in setting up a political party which would give him more room to manoeuvre and to assert his independent position vis-a-vis other organs of political power. But this achievement is nothing more than a consolation prize in the broader context of national politics. The launching of the Muslim League is neither going to enlarge his popular base nor win him credibility as an authoritative politician. On the other hand the exercise will be counter-productive insofar as it will offer an opportunity to the opposition to question his bona-fides as a genuine democrat who adheres to clean politics.

The hijacking of the Muslim League seems to be an apt description of what the government party is trying to accomplish. It is not only an attempt to wrest control of the party from the old guard, but also to eliminate them from politics. The rival claimants are established politicians with long associations with the Muslim League and cannot be knocked out from the contest on technical grounds.

The new rules for the registration of parties are a clear indication of the intent and it is obvious that the government party still wants to operate under legal protection against political rivals. It is indeed tragic that the Muslim League, which was once synony-

mous with the Pakistan movement had such a steady decline in influence and prestige in the post-independence period. Efforts to rejuvenate it have failed because it was never perceived as an organisation which could survive without government patronage. Moreover its leadership had no concrete programme to offer to the people except harping on the theme of a glorious past. The 1970 elections exploded the myth of its electoral strength and proved beyond doubt that it was no longer capable of capturing the imagination of the people even when it was not in the government. But if there were any chances of Muslim League once again becoming a factor in mass politics, they have been jeopardised by turning it into an appendage of the government and imposing it from above.

The official rationale for disallowing rival claimants to use the same name is not convincing. Even Ayub Khan had not thought of employing this ingenious technique to ward off political opponents. In democratic countries political parties are prone to split into factions which often make rival claims for representing the party. It is not a healthy tradition but infighting in political parties cannot be eliminated by legislation.

In India, in 1967 a split in the ruling Congress Party created two parallel organisations under the same name and both were recognised by the election commission. In 1979, the party was once again divided and Mrs Gandhi, in order

to distinguish her organisation from its rival, added the prefix, I. There are two communist parties recognised at the national level, in addition to several others operating in various regions. But this has neither given rise to the demand that organisations with similar names should not be allowed to function nor has it confused the electorate, who are at the same level of political consciousness as we are. Needless to say that voters in both countries identify the parties not with reference to their names, but the symbols allocated to them. In 1970 there were three parallel Muslim Leagues and each one of them participated in the polls without losing its identity or complaining that its rival had confused the voters.

However, in case the government is keen to purge national politics of all unhealthy trends and impel the parties to adhere to democratic norms in their internal functioning, the best course would be to leave the verdict to the people. A Government agency cannot be entrusted with the task of according selective recognition to political parties. Ironically the official Muslim League does not seem to be heading towards the destination of establishing a democratic apparatus which could be a precedent for others. The Prime Minister has ipso-facto assumed charge of its presidentship and the other office-bearers will be nominated by him. If this is how the official party is going to function, the opposition parties cannot be accused of being undemocratic.

/9317

CSO: 4600/192

PAKISTAN

SIND PPP SAID SUFFERING FROM SERIOUS INFIGHTING

Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 24 Jan 86 p 6

[Article by Nisar Channa]

[Text]

HYDERABAD, Jan. 23: Sind PPP President Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi is facing a two-pronged attack and has launched a counter-campaign to maintain his pre-eminent position in the party. On the one hand he is facing sharp criticism of party's stalwarts like Maulana Ehtiram-ul-Haq Thanvi and a young leader Makhdoom Khaliq-uz-Zaman, who has the dual privilege of being the scion of a Pir family and also a big Zamindar. In order to show their respective strength, Mr. Jatoi and Makhdoom have been touring the interior of the politically disturbed province and both have been getting impressive receptions. But in recent days, Makhdoom Khaliq-uz-Zaman, fresh from detention, has looked more popular among the workers, especially those who were jailed during the martial law days.

The other opposition to Mr. Jatoi comes from old PPP workers who have now joined the ranks of confederalists led by leaders like Mumtaz Bhutto. The polarisation in the Sind PPP has now crystallised with battle lines clearly drawn. Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi has the support of feudal lords while the majority of workers are gravitated towards the Makhdoom.

One of the serious causes of rift and opposition to Mr. Jatoi emanates from his action to delay the announcement of the names of office-bearers of the Sind PPP. The workers allege that Mr. Jatoi received the list from the Chairperson, Miss Benazir but since he did not find the list acceptable to

him, he sat on it without any cogent reasons, till after his meeting with Benazir in London during which he expects to get a revised list approved by the Chairperson. It was also being stated that Mr. Jatoi on failing to get the list of new office-bearers revised during his forthcoming meeting with Benazir, might choose to quit the party and form another political party of his own, but the sources close to Mr. Jatoi repudiated these insinuations saying that these were aimed at maligning Jatoi, who has stood firmly behind the Bhuttos all through these many years, even after he got offers of Prime Ministership from the ruling junta.

The workers also alleged that Mr. Jatoi has close links with the provincial governor and despite his denials he secretly met General Ziaul Haq in Saudi Arabia along with Mr. Khar, who had specially flown to that country for joining Mr. Jatoi in his parleys with the General for what they allege a clandestine deal with the rulers.

The coming few days are going to be really crucial ones for the Sind PPP but the indications are that political differences between the two sides have assumed serious proportions which are fraught with unpredictable dangers for the party in the politically changed situation in the country. May be the Chairperson will one day become available to salvage the party's position, which has been badly battered due to the infighting in the party.

/9317

CSO: 4600/192

PAKISTAN

FORMER JUSTICE WARNS WOMEN AGAINST SHARIAT BILL

Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 24 Jan 86 p 8

[Text]

LAHORE, Jan. 23: Chief Justice (Retd) Aftab Hussain of the Federal Shariat Court has said that women should be vigilant about their rights and struggle to safeguard them. Addressing a well attended meeting of WAF (Democratic) on the subject of "Women's Rights in Islam", he said that women had been deprived of a number of rights, and during his tenure as Chief Justice, he had given many decisions wherein women's rights were secured. Mostly he said, these rights were there but had been traditionally denied to women. In this connection he referred to two of his decisions. In one case he had declared the evidence of a woman, her father and brother valid for the purpose of dissolution of marriage, and in another case he had declared women eligible to be Qazis and even heads of state.

Chief Justice (Retd) Aftab Hussain expressed concern over Article 270-A adopted in the 8th Amendment, as it debarred all the courts from passing any verdict on the laws framed and applied under Martial Law. Explaining his point of view, he said the Federal Shariat Court had no power to review laws like the Haddood Ordinance, etc. Sounding a

note of warning, he said under the proposed 9th Amendment, the status of the Federal Shariat Court would be further reduced, and its findings would be of a recommendatory nature and not binding as court decisions. He said that with this amendment, Personal Law would also come under the purview of the Shariat Court, thus taking back the protection provided to Personal Law. This, he said, would badly affect the social set-up.

He described the proposed Shariat Bill as "very dangerous," and the Standing Committee, having viewed it, expressed the opinion that some of its provisions were contrary to constitutional provisions. He asked the women to demand reservation of seats in the Senate, as already proposed by Senator Javed Jabbar. Expressing surprise over the argument for not reserving seats in the Senate, the former Chief Justice of the Federal Shariat Court said that when women had been given seats in the National Assembly how could they be denied the right to become members of the Senate in the name of Islam?

The meeting condemned the provisions of the proposed constitutional 9th Amendment, under which Personal Laws were being brought within the purview of the Shariat Court.

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END